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ABSTRACT

In the United States, educators have had difficulty teaching about the Soviet Union. Students are often ignorant of the historical circumstances that have affected the U.S./Soviet relationship, and they are often miseducated by stereotypes they encounter in popular culture. This curriculum explores the government and economy of the Soviet Union, the nature of communism, human rights, Glasnost and Perestroika, and U.S. schools of thought about the Soviet Union. The pedagogical emphasis is on dialogue, critical thinking, and informed decision making. Students analyze political cartoons, media reports, philosophical and political writings, and government documents to achieve a new understanding of the Soviet Union, and so develop alternatives to the Cold War view of U.S./Soviet relations. A broad range of U.S. and Soviet perspectives is provided, allowing students to form their own opinions and enabling teachers and students to remain flexible in the face of dramatic, fast-breaking changes in the Soviet Union. Black and white photographs are included. (JB)

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THINKING ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION

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THINKING ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION

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FOREWORD

Educators for Social Responsibility is a national teachers' organization that offers curricula and professional development addressing the socially significant controversies of the nuclear age. ESR's publications reflect the organization's pedagogical emphasis on dialogue, questioning, critical thinking, empathy, multiple perspectives, cooperative problem-solving, non-violent conflict resolution, and informed decision-making. The curricula are designed to encourage student participation in society, to assist in the development of students' social consciences, and ultimately to empower students and help them contemplate their actions in the world. Students and teachers are considered to be active and collaborating learning partners, and curricula are designed to emphasize the experience of students. Textbooks stress both intellectual and emotional learning, appropriate to each age level, helping to develop both cognitive and affective faculties.

For further information about ESR's publications and programs, and for information about membership in the organization, please write to: Educators for Social Responsibility, 23 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Richard Bolton
Director of Publications

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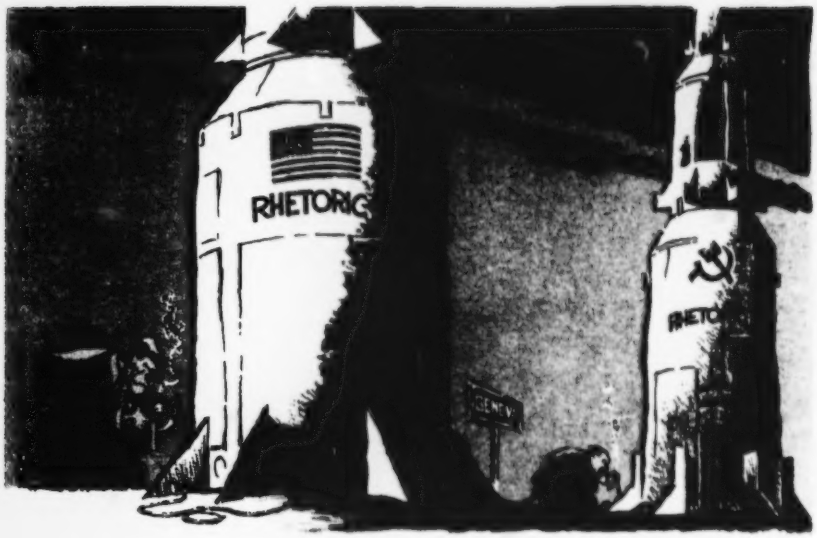

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

THINKING ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION

In the United States, it has been very difficult to teach about the Soviet Union. Students are often ignorant of the historical circumstances that have affected our relationship with the Soviet Union, and they are often miseducated by stereotypes they encounter in popular culture. Although they are filled with images of the Soviet Union that they want to explore, they also feel some fear of and resistance to such exploration. Teaching about the Soviet Union is a potentially volatile endeavor for any teacher, since such discussions about the present day bear directly upon the students' own sense of security. Yet our survival and the survival of many other peoples depend in large measure upon our relationship with this country. While we may always have ideological disagreements with the Soviet Union, and although our two countries may always remain competitive, military solutions to our conflicts are no longer tenable. We must look for political solutions; thus it is of utmost importance that we learn about and try to understand the USSR. Through such understanding, we can fashion a more pragmatic approach to the Soviet Union, and further the potential for cooperation between the two countries. Educators can play an important role in the development of this understanding.

Teaching about the Soviet Union is a potentially volatile endeavor for any teacher, since such discussions about the present day bear directly upon the student's own sense of security.

In this curriculum we have chosen to place the study of the Soviet Union within the larger context of the study of all foreign societies. This curriculum aims to help students:

- To broaden their awareness of the diverse ways of life in different societies, and most specifically, to increase their understanding of life within the Soviet Union.
- To understand how the political and economic culture of a given country helps to form the identity of its citizens.

■ To analyze critically the information they receive about the Soviet Union and the United States.

■ To distinguish differences between fact and interpretation, learning the role of each in the comparative study of governments.

■ To develop ways to evaluate the actions and policies of various governments.

■ To identify different possibilities for the conduct of American-Soviet relations and, more generally, to identify ways in which international relations might be improved.

We have provided historical information, statistics, and source material for the teacher whenever such material seemed necessary to the question at hand. We have stressed contemporary information whenever possible, for many textbooks on the Soviet Union now in use provide students primarily with information about Tsarist Russia and the 1917 Revolution. Much less attention is paid to Soviet history after 1917, with the exception of Stalin's reign of terror. Post-World War II Soviet society often is given superficial treatment. [A welcome exception to this trend is *From Russia to the USSR*, by Janet Vaillant and John Richards (New York: Longman, 1985). We recommend that this text, or some other detailed history of the USSR, be used in conjunction with this curriculum to provide students with additional historical background for the issues discussed here.]

The student will be encouraged to interpret events from a variety of perspectives.

However, this curriculum is not intended as a substitute for a thorough historical study of the Soviet Union. Instead, it should be used as a complement to such study. *Thinking About the Soviet Union* explores the *context* for study about the USSR—namely, the American *interpretation* of Soviet experience and influence, and the understandings and misconceptions that result from this interpretation. The influence of American goals, not to mention the viewpoint of a given textbook's author, are left unexamined. Historical materials are a necessary part of any study, but they are insufficient by themselves, for they do not help students grapple with their questions about present day "Russia."

Beyond the facts of history, students need to explore a variety of issues raised in the mass media or by politicians and activists. To make sense of the world around them, students must develop skills that enable them to evaluate the information they hear and to formulate their own reasoned opinions about this information. This curriculum aims to facilitate such investigation. Specifically, this curriculum will impart to students a number of fundamental concepts that can be used to approach not only the Soviet Union, but also

many other foreign cultures or societies, including subcultures within the United States. In fact, the introductory activities contain no direct reference to the Soviet Union, but instead offer a general framework; only after this groundwork is completed do we proceed with an examination of the Soviet Union. We believe that this approach to the USSR as one of many other foreign societies offers a valuable corrective to approaches that consider the Soviet Union *only* as a dangerous enemy of the United States. In the end, we hope that students will achieve a richer and less mystified understanding of the USSR and our relationship to it.

This book addresses many of the political issues that arise in discussions about the Soviet Union: freedom, human rights, political ambitions, and propaganda. In presenting these issues we have striven for balance. But given that there is much disagreement about the very definition of balance, it is necessary that we say how we have considered balance while writing this curriculum. There are many different kinds of balanced viewpoints. We can be balanced within the American political spectrum: we can include voices from the "left," the "right" and the "middle." We might also strive for balance by presenting various Soviet viewpoints (for instance, views of both conservatives and reformers) along with American viewpoints. We can even work for balance in the largest context of international politics by reporting voices from varied nations outside the U.S. and the Soviet Union. We have tried to present such a range of views within the curriculum. Frequently, the curriculum poses the United States government's view of an event alongside the Soviet government's view. At other times, the range of views across the American spectrum is discussed in depth. Still other times, debates within the Soviet Union itself give students an idea of balance within Soviet society. This variation of perspectives is intended to show that balance is a shifting concept, and that balance depends on context. The student will be encouraged to interpret events from a variety of perspectives. The materials we have selected to assist the teacher are the result of a thorough study of American curricula, education textbooks and pamphlets on the Soviet Union; of many trips to the Soviet Union; of conversations with experts on the Soviet Union; and of a review of Soviet sources. We believe these materials will both communicate the complexity of the issues that arise between the United States and the Soviet Union and help students negotiate this complexity.

Yet even with the presentation of all of these views, it might be said that the curriculum is still not balanced. In fact, *absolute* balance is impossible. Political opinions cannot be balanced like mathematical equations. And it is also true that changes in the political mood of countries can alter the definition of what is "balanced" or "biased." Today's "impartial" presentation

Changes in the political mood of countries can alter the definition of what is "balanced" or "biased."

may be considered "right-wing" or "left-wing" tomorrow. Further, no matter how balanced we mean to be, we cannot escape the fact that we (along with all other textbook authors and publishers) have opinions on the Soviet Union and the role the United States should take in relating to the USSR. In addition, we (and other authors and teachers) have certain beliefs about how "good" education should proceed.

So let us state our point-of-view clearly. This curriculum teaches that reality in the Soviet Union is far more complicated than we are commonly taught. (A similar distortion occurs in Soviet education about the United States.) It is vital to recognize this, for we might otherwise be misled by the simplified pictures of "the other side" that governments and mass media around the world often create. Thus this curriculum leads students to pause and think before judging complex issues. But we must be careful that awareness of the complexity of a government's actions does not keep us from ever making judgments about those actions. Consequently, we also teach that certain facts are more fundamentally important than others; these facts should not be brushed aside in our appreciation of the complexity of actions.

The Soviet Union, by concentrating power in one tightly controlled party, continually generates opposition to this system from people who remain outside it.

We must understand that Soviet citizens support many features of their system. As one scholar put it: "The majority of the Soviet people (or, at least, the majority of the politically active part of the population—those to whom it makes a difference) support the regime."[1] Or, as a 23 year-old worker in the Russian city of Rostov recently said: "People don't live very well here, but they don't live badly either. Mostly they are content. They don't want to rock any boats."[2] Recognizing that Soviet citizens have great criticisms of their system does not mean that these citizens necessarily want to replace their system with any other government.

But we must also remember that many Soviet citizens feel that the only way to improve their lives is to oppose their political system. These challenges to the system may take place quietly, through participation in the black and gray markets, through the underground practice of religion, or even through alcoholism. In rare cases, people have openly challenged the system, becoming political dissidents. A key fact, then, that education about the Soviet Union must convey is that the Soviet Union, by concentrating power in one tightly controlled party, continually generates opposition to this system from people who remain outside it. As the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty once wrote, the Soviet system "unceasingly creates its opposition."[3] Yet today, under new policies that encourage Soviet *glasnost* [openness] and other kinds of democratization, the Soviet government tolerates the public expression of many views that have been considered

dissident, and proposes as well to diminish pervasive Party control. (This new openness has softened some opposition, and has also prompted more conservative Soviet citizens to work against these new reforms.)

Just as we cannot gauge from this dissent exactly what the Soviets want to do about their system, we cannot gain from this internal resistance a clear understanding of what *we* should do about the Soviet system. Instead, such dissent raises many perplexing questions. Should the United States try to change the internal practices of the Soviet Union? Can we? What moral, legal, economic and political factors have to be considered?

How is the role of the individual different from that of a government when promoting change in other countries? Should principles of "non-interference" apply to individuals and private groups who are not bound by laws governing relations between countries? And even if government interference in the domestic affairs of sovereign states violates laws of international relations, should governments interfere anyway? Finally, do we approach each country differently? Do we push for internal change in different ways in South Africa, Central America, the Soviet Union, Japan, and Great Britain, depending on what works effectively in each case, or should we have a consistent approach based solely upon an ethical position?

How is the role of the individual different from that of a government when promoting change in other countries?

This curriculum does not answer entirely these complicated questions. Its goal instead is to stimulate the kind of thinking that will help individuals find answers. But the basic premise of this curriculum is indeed that competition is a fact of life in relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. The Soviet Union and the United States are two vastly different societies, with dissimilar histories and cultural habits. Neither society sees its own flaws or successes in the same way as the other does; neither society understands the other. Each is heavily armed in opposition to the other. And although there have been recent laudable attempts by the two countries to cooperate, to begin a new relationship, for the immediate future we must anticipate that relations between the two countries will often be marked by tension and competition, even as the quest for cooperation continues.

It is also reasonable to assume that *within* each country there will be disagreements about how each country should view and act toward the other. The complexity of both American and Soviet societies makes generalization difficult. Each country has within it distinct and strongly opposed viewpoints; within each society those who disagree must try to get along without destroying each other and their society. Americans generally claim that whatever their differences may be, all Americans share an interest in dealing with these differences without threatening one another's very existence. One political party does not try to eliminate the other; each party

agrees to disagree while respecting basic rules governing their behavior. In the past, there has been very little evidence of toleration and cooperation within the Soviet Union. Much of the politics of that country have been conducted secretly, and through the workings of a single political party, the Communist Party. Still we know that in the Soviet Union, people do disagree publicly with the government on a significant range of issues. Recently, with *perestroika* and *glasnost*, the government is becoming even more tolerant of argument and dissent, often encouraging public debate.

Political conflicts both within the U.S. and in our foreign affairs are carried into our schools. Students often have differing opinions regarding the USSR or American policy, but need help formulating and clarifying their ideas. Teachers and administrators have been left to choose between working with students without the benefit of adequate teaching materials or ignoring these issues entirely. This curriculum seeks to bring people's opinions of the USSR out into the open where they can be considered intelligently. The process we suggest is meant to ensure that the classroom is a safe environment for all children to express their questions and opinions openly, without recrimination from their peers or teachers. We believe that this process encourages a pluralism that is vital to the American democratic experience.

By recognizing the contingency of social practices, and by approaching these practices discursively, we may indeed instill a "renewed sense of community."

The educational process of this curriculum is based primarily upon Socratic dialogue. This process, in the words of Richard Rorty, depends upon our "willingness to talk, to listen to other people, to weigh the consequences of our actions upon other people."[4] As Richard Bernstein has noted, "it means taking conversation seriously (and playfully)," without thinking necessarily that we must "put an end to conversation by reaching some sort of 'rational consensus'."[5] By recognizing the contingency of social practices, and by approaching these practices discursively, we may indeed instill a "renewed sense of community" (Rorty).

The need for dialogue in today's world is evident, but the constraints against it are also apparent. While it may be true that at times these constraints require dialogue to be abandoned, and forceful conflict taken up instead, in the classroom there is no justification for the abeyance of dialogue. Young hearts and minds are entrusted to teachers for safe and creative education, and it is with respect for this trust that we have composed this curriculum.

AMERICAN SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION

This section is intended to familiarize teachers with basic American schools of thought regarding the Soviet Union. By gaining a better understanding of these schools of thought, teachers can use this curriculum to teach more effectively about the Soviet Union from multiple perspectives. Teachers should ask themselves how their views fit into the schools of thought sketched below. Before raising issues about the Soviet Union with students, it is important for teachers to examine their own presumptions and biases. It is also crucial for teachers to continue this examination of their own views while teaching. Teachers should work with their own biases within as well as without the classroom, engaging in the dialogical teaching this curriculum encourages.

Most Americans have never been to the Soviet Union or even read from Soviet sources, and so our attitudes about the Soviet Union have come to be shaped primarily by American experts and politicians and by the mass media. We often receive opinions without being aware of the larger schools of thought that inform them; yet the views we receive are more than factual accounts—they are *interpretations* of events that are informed by these larger concerns. Consequently, schools of thought about the Soviet Union that affect opinion-makers must necessarily become a part of our study.

We often receive opinions without being aware of the larger schools of thought that inform them.

But as we have already mentioned, there is more to developing a balanced look at the Soviet Union than simply including various *American* perspectives. Focusing our attention solely on versions of American schools of thought may only reinforce the tendency to see the Soviet Union solely in the terms of American experience. Thus we intend this summary of American views solely for the teacher's information. It needs to be remembered that the lessons in this curriculum are *not* organized around these American schools of thought. Instead, the endeavor is to explore the Soviet Union without relying completely upon *any* single school of thought.

When thinking about the Soviet Union, there can be as many perspectives as there are university professors, politicians, newspaper editors, or American citizens. Often we use vague language to describe these "schools of thought": "hard-liners," "centrists," "neo-Marxists," and so on. Most of us who have not studied the Soviet Union extensively may be confused by the meaning of these perspectives and how they differ.

The diverse perspectives held by Americans concerning the Soviet

Union are usually oversimplified into dichotomies—one is either for a certain policy or country or against it. We have tried to complicate such thinking here, providing a summary of three distinct perspectives on the USSR. While not an exhaustive analysis, these views provide a sense of the diversity possible. *School A* holds that the USSR is, above all, an "illegitimate," evil society, due in part to the nature of communist ideals themselves and in part to accidents of Russian history. In contrast, *School B* does not concern itself with the moral nature of Soviet society, but sees the Soviet Union as one of several powerful actors on the international scene. *School C* strikes a position between Schools A and B, albeit a conservative position.

The Yalta Conference: Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin.

School A

According to this school, the Soviet Union is "an 'illegitimate' kind of society," an "evil empire" ruled by a small group of men in the Communist Party who impose their will by force upon the masses. Social institutions—schools, companies, governmental services, organizations, the mass media, and so forth—do not provide people with the opportunity to participate in the government; instead, these institutions exist to enforce orders from those on top. The primary goal of those in power is to prevent the Soviet people from questioning the government; in this way, the dictatorship can be preserved.[1] In short, the political character of the society resembles a "concentration camp."[2] The proponents of School A claim that the Soviet people do not support this system and would like to see it changed into a system more like our own.

According to this point of view, the Soviet economy is a failure. As proof, the slow growth of the Soviet economy over the last several years is cited, as is the inability of this system to promote technological innovation. It is acknowledged that the basic necessities of life are provided cheaply to the population, but the proponents of School A also emphasize that many desired goods—electronics, certain foods, fashionable clothes, new apartments—are hard to find and of poor quality. In other words, for consumers the economy does not work well. The failures of the economy are said to lie in the Soviet system of central planning, a system that may have created industrial growth in the Soviet Union earlier in the century, but that now cannot serve the needs of the Soviet people. It is argued that no system other than a market economy will serve Soviet needs; Soviet politicians are said to fear such an economy as it will threaten their special position controlling the economy.

In their foreign policy, the Soviets are said to have a grand strategy for controlling the world. As a result, it is felt that the Soviet Union must be considered a hostile and aggressive country, working to establish control of

noncommunist countries, not only the United States and Western Europe but also Japan and other non-Western states. In the Third World, it is argued that the Soviets aim to prevent friendships between Third World countries and the developed capitalist countries, and so "cut off the capitalist countries from sources of raw materials and cheap labor, to deprive them of military bases, and ultimately to isolate them."[3] In addition, the Soviet Union uses the threat of nuclear annihilation to frighten the West into making concessions. And while most in this school do not think the Soviets would launch a nuclear attack without provocation, it is felt that the Soviets would strike first if a war appeared inevitable.

Ultimately this school believes that normal relations with the Soviet Union are impossible unless basic changes take place in it. The Soviet Union "was created not by God but by the Devil, and . . . [its] existence in its present form should be ended somehow."[4] U.S. policy should strive to make the Soviet leadership change its society. Although our own security may require that we occasionally meet with the Soviets, in general we should concentrate on increasing our military presence, and so force the Soviet rulers to change their system. We should undermine the Soviet Union economically when the opportunities arise, for example, by withholding grain or by withholding technology.[5]

John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev meet.

School B

This school believes that the moral value of communist ideas is debatable, and it argues that Soviet ideology must be seen in its historical and social context if one is to improve one's understanding of the Soviet Union. This view also describes the Soviet Union as a repressive state with few guarantees of individual political rights, but where Marxist ideals of full equality have not yet been achieved. Yet this school argues that the Soviet system has been supported by the populace from the earliest days. This school claims that most Soviets have experienced dramatic improvements in their quality of life since 1917, and particularly since the devastation of World War II and the crimes of Stalin. Moreover, it is felt that people in institutions—schools, industries, local governments—do influence the state's decision-making process. Soviet citizens feel that they have a stake in both local and national government, that they are permitted significant debate on most policy questions within Soviet newspapers and journals.[6] In short, this school holds that Soviet society, seventy years after its revolution, is still evolving, and that its serious flaws can be remedied over time.

School B also acknowledges the shortcomings of the Soviet economy today, especially in the areas of technological innovations and consumer

goods, and agrees that these problems result from the cumbersome Soviet system of central planning. But School B emphasizes the dramatic rise in the standard of living in the Soviet Union that has resulted from central planning, especially in the regions of Central Asia. Furthermore, this school of thought emphasizes that present Soviet leaders recognize the need for innovation and change in the structure of their economy. As a result, Soviet leaders have introduced "market-like" reforms, even while knowing that this means a transfer of power from the bureaucracy to industrial managers and consumers.

Jimmy Carter and Leonid Brezhnev meet.

On the question of foreign policy, this school points out that the United States and Soviet Union are in competition for the political allegiance and economic resources of other countries, but this school accepts the non-military aspects of this rivalry. It sees that Soviet overtures for influence may be irksome to the U.S., but, given the basic competition between the two systems, both understandable and negotiable. Members of this school form their opinions about Soviet influence on a case-by-case basis. Generally, Soviet control over Eastern Europe is granted as a post-war reality, although there is no support for Soviet invasions of these countries. Less dramatic instances of Soviet influence, and of Soviet influence through proxies, are not judged so harshly. In fact, when considering turmoil within developing Third World countries, this school is less likely to blame the Soviet Union, attributing such turmoil instead to social and political causes specific to each developing country. This school does agree that the Soviet Union, given an opportunity in developing countries, will work to exclude the West from playing a role or receiving benefits from these countries, and will work to heighten its own prestige, just as the United States and other powerful countries do.

Regarding arms control, this school argues that the Soviets now genuinely seek deep reductions in nuclear weapons and other military forces. According to this school, the Soviets want to save money for domestic needs, and thus, stability between the Soviet Union and other countries is a necessary part of domestic reform. This new political thinking of the Soviets lies behind numerous concessions they have made in arms control talks with the United States.

In sum, this perspective is less likely to see the Soviet Union as a threat to our existence: conflicts between the two countries are attributed to a crisis in the balance and management of power, rather than to a fight between forces of good and evil. Consequently, it is neither our right nor within our power to change the character of Soviet society; such fundamental change must be left

to the Soviet people themselves. In fact, this school argues that overly aggressive U.S. policies against the Soviet Union will work against those in Soviet society who want to change the system, providing a rationale for those Soviet leaders who would support a hard-line stance against the West. Consequently, it is felt that the U.S. should help relax the atmosphere between the two countries and attempt to learn about and serve the interests of the people in both societies.

School C

This third school of thought does not describe the Soviet system in moral terms—as an evil empire, for example. Nor does it try to assess whether the system is legitimate in the eyes of Soviet citizens. Instead this position offers itself as an approach based upon *realpolitik*, that is, as an approach based upon practical factors rather than theoretical or ethical ones. One recent spokesperson for this approach is Richard Nixon: "No matter how critical we are of the Russians and their actions in the world, we should never be contemptuous of them. We must respect the Soviet Union as a strong and worthy adversary. Respect is important between friends; it is indispensable between potential enemies in the nuclear age."[7]

Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev meet.

Much like School A, this view emphasizes the totalitarian, centralized structure of power in the Soviet Union. Power is not considered to be diffused through the huge central and regional bureaucracies; instead, the 13 members of the Politburo are thought to be all-powerful. This school is skeptical, for instance, of Mikhail Gorbachev's recent attempts to increase the roles of citizens and local business and government managers in Soviet decision-making.

Regardless of how the Soviets feel about their economic system, this system is felt to be so fundamentally flawed that it must be altered if the Soviet economy is to function productively. Excessive centralization is seen as the principal problem of the Soviet economy; also noted is the declining productivity of Soviet labor and the widespread "absenteeism, corruption, malingering and drunkenness"[8] in Soviet society. This school de-emphasizes the results the Soviet system has achieved in its 70 years, emphasizing instead the failures of this system.

Like those in School A, the proponents of School C assert that the goal of Soviet policy is to dominate the world. The Soviet Union still seeks to expand its influence and power, and holds global predominance as its long-term goal. But unlike School A, School C emphasizes that Soviet power and influence around the world is decreasing. As evidence, this school cites the unrest and

discontent in the Warsaw Pact countries, the longevity and continued strength of NATO, and the emergence and independence of China and Japan. The Third World countries that have been influenced by the Soviet Union—Vietnam, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, Cuba, Nicaragua—provide the Soviet Union with no economic advantages. The problems in these developing countries drain Soviet resources rather than enriching the country. The Soviet Union is still a formidable military power, but even School C concludes, this power cannot be sustained without economic reform.

Given this analysis, School C, like School B, advocates the pursuit of arms control and other forms of cooperation with the Soviets. But it is felt that such cooperation must be framed by the recognition that the Soviets are not really interested in creating a more stable, demilitarized world. School C does not believe that the Soviets under Gorbachev have fundamentally rethought the usefulness of nuclear arms and military power. Instead, the advocates of this perspective caution that arms control deals may be concessions to the Soviets, concessions that may play into a Soviet trap. School C insists that the U.S. not agree to arms control until the Soviet Union works to reduce the political tensions at the root of the conflict between the superpowers. Even if an agreement were possible tomorrow, School C argues that this agreement should be refused until the Soviets make concessions in other areas. As far as negotiations go, School C does not believe that there are significant differences between the "hawks" and the "doves" in the Soviet leadership. This school rejects the argument that we have a special interest in dealing with Gorbachev, to better support his reform program, stressing instead that American foreign policy should be considered independently from Soviet domestic policy.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

UNDERSTANDING OTHER CULTURES

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES:

UNDERSTANDING OTHER CULTURES

INTRODUCTION

The following classroom simulations are designed to raise some of the fundamental issues that are encountered when we attempt to understand other cultures. These activities allow students to understand certain concepts through their own experience in the classroom. In these activities, students are asked to examine very basic assumptions about community and government. What is a society? What is it for? What are the most important tasks that a society might take up? What kind of governing structures are necessary to complete these tasks? What jobs are necessary in a given society? What role should money play? Through these simulations and the discussions they will generate, students should progress from their particular views to a general understanding of societal dynamics.

Students are divided into groups that serve as miniature societies. The students then are presented with conflicts that simulate real-world struggles among different societies. Students must contend with basic needs, employment, disorder, differences within their society, and communication. Through such role-playing, it is intended that the students will draw analogies between their experience in the simulation and greater world conditions. More particularly, the simulation should prepare students to think more clearly about the Soviet Union as a foreign culture. It will help create a calm and reflective approach required for the subsequent exercises in this book.

All societies are living and evolving organisms. What was true about a society in the past may differ from what is now true, or what will be true about the society in the future.

The following generalizations may help the teacher direct the discussions that ensue from the simulations. However, they are offered only as one possible guide. Teachers should allow the explorations of basic concepts to develop without pointing students toward preconceived conclusions.

GENERALIZATIONS FOR THE TEACHER

■ All societies share a basic set of tasks they must solve. These tasks include providing food, shelter, and other biological necessities; deciding what laws, rules, or values should govern the behavior of people in the society; educating the young; defending the society; and enhancing the enjoyment of life for members of the society. Each society approaches these tasks in different ways.

■ After a group has invested time, energy, and emotion in developing solutions to these basic tasks, it often feels threatened by people who do things differently. The group may fear that other people or customs may replace the society it has built. To protect itself, a group may work to persuade other groups to adopt its ways.

After a group has invested time, energy, and emotion in developing solutions to basic tasks, it often feels threatened by people who do things differently.

■ Although one group of people may do things differently from others, each group must work to understand the ways other groups see the world if cooperative relationships are to develop. This does not mean that all must agree with a single way of life, but that all must strive to understand the authenticity of other ways. Such understanding, however, cannot become so relativist that crucial judgments are impossible.

■ Sources of information and communication about the world—television, textbooks, newspapers, rock videos—often drastically simplify our society, and the societies of others. This makes it difficult for us to discover the truths about ourselves and others, truths that are often complex.

■ All societies are living and evolving organisms. What was true about a society in the past may differ from what is now true, or what will be true about that society in the future.

ESTABLISHING A SOCIETY

OBJECTIVES:
In this activity, students are asked to explore the concept of a society. They are asked to consider the very nature of collective enterprise as they organize a society and determine its tasks.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Play money.

TIME REQUIRED: 3 classroom periods (45 minutes each).

PROCEDURE:

Period One: Setting the Goals of the Society

■ Divide the class into several groups. These groups ideally should be composed of 5–8 students but other groupings will work. Teachers may want to consider certain demographic factors when organizing the groups; the gender, race, economic background, and so forth of each student may play a role in the teacher's decisions.

■ Ask each group to discuss the following question: What are the tasks that the members of a community need to solve together? Teachers should not at first provide the students with possible answers, but at some point the teacher may want to suggest the following needs for consideration: food, shelter, clothing, health, housing, education, employment, defense, communication, leisure, spiritual needs.

■ Students should by the end of the period reach a consensus of the most important tasks they feel that a community can solve together. Teachers should ask students to list these tasks in order of importance.

Period Two: Creating a Government

■ Students should meet again in their groups. They should decide upon a form of government that will help them achieve the goals they established during Period One. The teacher should ask the groups to consider whether they will identify a single leader, or several leaders, or whether they will govern themselves without established leadership. The groups should determine the amount and nature of the power the leader(s) will have. Will the group allow a dictatorship? Will the group make decisions through voting? Should the vote be unanimous? 2/3 majority? Simple majority? Consensus? Even if no leaders are chosen, the group should work out a governing process, unless, of course, the group opts for anarchy. (Teachers

may want to review with the class various forms of government, and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each. These forms are taken up in detail in ESR's curriculum *Making History*.[1]) Each group should also make any other rules that they feel are necessary for the functioning of the group. For instance, should speech be regulated in any way (taking turns, not interrupting, etc.)? Students may also want to name their society to draw a clearer analogy between their group and a nationality or country.

■ Students should write these rules down, thereby establishing a "constitution" for their group. This constitution might be completed as a group homework assignment.

Soviet villagers go to market.

Period Three: Fulfilling the Goals of the Society

■ Students meet again in groups. Now that the tasks and the procedures of the society are clear, students should determine which jobs will be necessary to fulfill the most important goals of the society. These jobs should then be assigned to various members of the group. Students should use the form of government they have established to make these decisions. The society might have jobs in teaching, farming, law enforcement, retailing, medicine, and so on; it is most important that the students decide for themselves what occupations they will have in their society. When assigning these jobs to members of the group, students should consider the following: Are some jobs more important than others? What criteria will determine job assignments (ability, interest, the importance of the job, favoritism)? Will anyone be unemployed?

■ Teachers should provide each group with a fixed amount of play money. The group should determine, on the basis of the jobs given, how to distribute this money in the group. Wages for each position should be established, and the funds paid out.

■ Students should list the jobs in their society, and note the individuals who hold them, and the pay these individuals receive.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ Before moving on to the next activity, teachers should discuss with students the decisions each group has made, pointing out the similarities and differences between each group. Teachers should also compare and contrast each group's decisions with the structure of organization within the United States. Teachers may want to list these comparisons on the blackboard.

■ After comparisons have been made, ask students if they would make revisions in the process decided by their group. Discuss as well whether such changes would be possible within the system their group has designed.

■ Teachers may also want to discuss with students the various factors that determine jobs and wages in the United States.

INTRO/ACTIVITY TWO

RELATING TO OTHER SOCIETIES

OBJECTIVES:
In this activity, students will confront some basic problems in communicating with other cultures, and with negotiation. This activity will also teach students about the limits of reports that they receive about other cultures, thus helping them to develop the critical thinking necessary for this curriculum.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Play money, appropriate presentation materials to be determined by teacher.

TIME REQUIRED: 2 classroom periods (45 minutes each).

PROCEDURE:

Period One: Reporting About Other Societies

■ Each group appoints a newspaper and a television reporter. Each group's reporters are assigned to cover another group. The reporters must go to this assigned group and interview the members about the decisions the group has made about its government, jobs, and wages. Each reporter should, of course, take notes; these notes will become the basis for the reports that the reporters will compose. Interviewers should not only attempt to describe the facts that pertain to each group; they should also try to discover how each

A Moscow couple watches a television report on a recent summit.

member of the society feels about the decisions that have been made. Is there dissent or disagreement between members? Does the group communicate well?

■ Newspaper reporters should write a short article and television reporters should make a short presentation. These presentations might be completed as homework, or the teacher may choose to take an additional period for the composition of these reports. Television reporters should make a 1-1/2 minute presentation and newspaper reporters should compose a five or six paragraph story. These limits upon length should be respected.

Period Two: Relationships Between Societies

■ Each group is told that it has a certain raw material that is desired by another group. Teachers can decide which raw materials each group has, and which group needs which materials. Students must then invent ways to get the material they need from the other group.

■ Students may invent any number of solutions. Group A may offer to pay Group B for material; Group A may collect this money from the members of Group A (through a tax of some kind). Group A may want to steal this material from Group B, even going to war to obtain it. Group A may also invent another solution through negotiation with Group B.

■ The teacher can complicate the game as much as he/she wishes. For instance, Group A may have the material Group B wants, and vice versa, making an easy trade possible. But Group A may have what Group C wants, Group C what Group B wants, and so forth, so that solutions will require the interaction of several groups. Perhaps the groups will set up a trade council or international agency to arbitrate exchanges and disputes. Teachers could also "provide" each group with arms, nuclear capabilities, and so forth to increase the range of decisions possible. Teachers should not stress negotiation with students, but should instead allow students to determine their own solutions. Students, however, should be reminded that the solutions they create should be composed using the government they have designed. (Exercises of this nature for younger students can be found in William Kreidler's *Creative Conflict Resolution*.[2])

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Period One

■ After the presentations are made, each group should decide how fairly they feel they were reported. Teachers should first have students write down their individual perceptions of the reports, and then discuss their feelings with the rest of the group. Students should pay particular attention to material that was excluded from the reports (if any material was excluded). Conjectures should be made about each reporter's decision-making and editing process. After each group forms its analysis of the reporters' presentations, the reporters should respond, explaining what decisions went into the construction of the reports, and how they dealt with the limitations imposed upon the length of their presentations.

■ As a follow-up assignment, students can be assigned to read a newspaper or watch television news for the next several nights. Ask them to pay special attention to the issues reported, and the time or space given to each issue. Do the stories offer sufficient information to the student to allow the student to judge the balance and fairness of the report? Students may want to bring in newspaper articles, or videotaped news reports that they feel are examples of particularly good or bad reportage. Teachers may have each student choose an issue that he/she can follow for several days or weeks, collecting the various viewpoints presented in the media, and comparing these viewpoints.

■ Teachers may even want to invite scholars or critics, or representatives from local media sources into the classroom to discuss the way issues are reported.

Period Two

■ Students should review both the decisions that they have made, and the process they went through to make these decisions. Did they make the best decisions? What criteria should they use to determine what the best decision might be? Could other solutions have been found? Did the structure of their decision-making process influence the decisions they made? What would the group need to have done to make different decisions?

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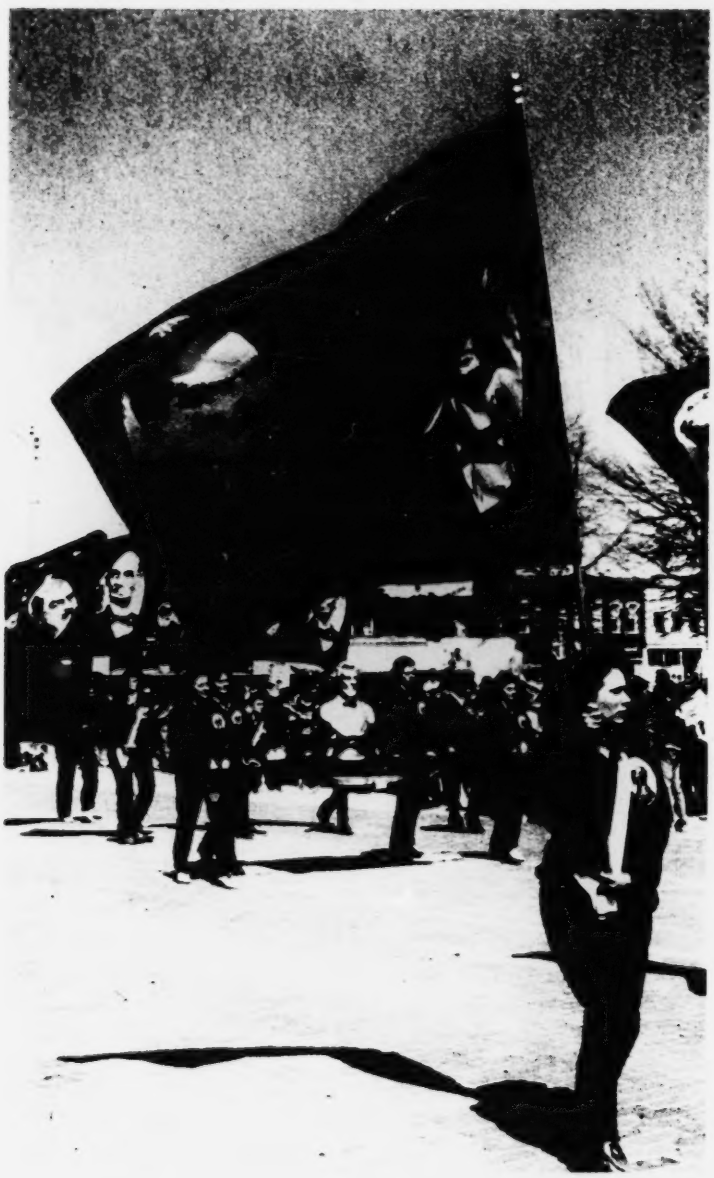


HOW WE GET OUR INFORMATION ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION

A scene from the ABC miniseries *Amerika.*

1

HOW WE GET OUR INFORMATION ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION

INTRODUCTION

ASSESSING THE INFORMATION WE RECEIVE

If we are to make intelligent judgments about the Soviet Union, we must develop a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the information we receive. The lessons below are designed to help students develop a more critical approach to media. Yet how much knowledge must one have to judge a report of an issue? How will students recognize that an issue is indeed oversimplified? Throughout this chapter, it is important for teachers to investigate the criteria of fairness and balance. This task is difficult, for the criteria may change with every issue. How much history must be known? When is geography pertinent? How much must we know of economic and social conditions? Do we need to know a great deal about all the individuals involved? Finally, and most importantly, how do we make decisions when our information is limited, as it often is?

In this chapter, students are asked to examine cartoons, news reports, films, and other materials; it is hoped that students will become more sensitive to the influence exerted by the method of reportage itself. Teachers may want to invite scholars, critics, and representatives from local media sources to discuss these issues.

Teachers may want to begin this chapter by simply listing with the students as many different media sources as they can think of from which they receive information about the Soviet Union. The list will no doubt include newspapers, magazines, television, and film, and may even include such things as rock videos. Many of these media will be discussed in this chapter. Each activity in this section of the book is centered upon a single media source or type of information, allowing teachers to explore with students not only specific content, but the constraints and possibilities of various *forms* of information.

In every activity, teachers and students should keep the following questions in mind[1]:

- What does the source say about life in the Soviet Union?
- How does it back up what it says? Does the source offer stories, statistics, or examples?
- What feeling do you get about the Soviet Union from this article?
- What in the article makes you feel this way?
- Do you believe what the article says? Why or why not?
- If you do not believe the article, could parts of it still be true?
- If you do believe the article, do you think it is true for everyone in the USSR?
- What questions could you ask to help you decide whether or not to believe it?

Teachers and students might also ask the following questions about the author(s) and publisher(s) of the information:

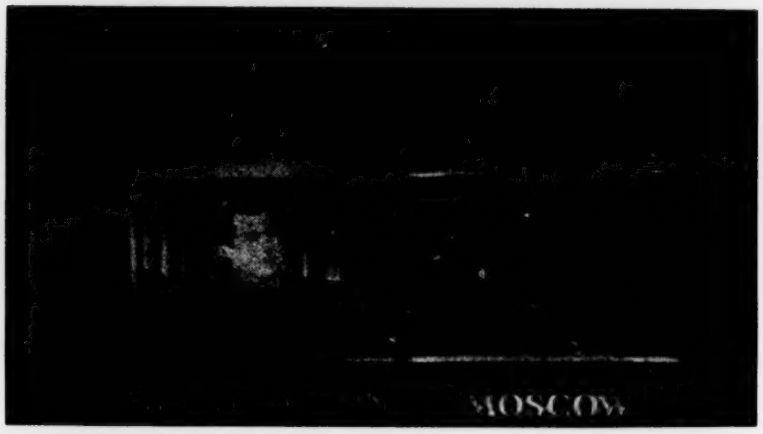
- Who is the author of this information?
- What type of person is the author? Is the author Russian or American, a member of a political group, anonymous, etc.?
- How has this person obtained his/her information about the USSR?
- How limited or extensive is that person's experience?
- How might that person's experience affect his/her understanding of the USSR?
- What motivations or purposes might the person have in communicating this information?

■ Who published the material?

■ Did the article appear in a journal? Magazine? Newspaper? Some other source? How might the nature of the publication itself influence what is said about the USSR?

Studying several different perspectives on the Soviet Union often leads people to ask if there is any one truth about the country. The analyses we read in the United States are often contradictory and so, with study, things often become more complex. But such broad study helps us to understand our own biases, as well as those of different authors, and it helps us arrive at a more complicated truth.

While it may be true that the information we receive regarding the Soviet Union does not always reflect the complex nature of that society, we should keep in mind that the Soviet government has created many obstacles that have made a broader view difficult to obtain. Soviet institutions have tended to be extremely secretive. Only the opinions and news approved by leaders have been made available. In addition, the Soviet people, though friendly and interested in speaking with Westerners, have felt wary about such contacts. We have received very few leaks from behind the scenes in the Soviet government, and as a result, Western reporters have found it difficult to get at the motivations behind Soviet actions. (This is true to a lesser extent with all countries. Foreign policy motivations generally are difficult to ascertain.)



A television linkup between Washington and Moscow allowed Peter Jennings (ABC-TV) and Leonid Zolotarevsky (Gosteiradio) to discuss human rights.

In this chapter, we have tried to suggest the need to analyze all information we receive about the Soviet Union. Rather than settling for one source, we should seek several perspectives on any major questions, including Soviet views. Through questioning and through consideration of different points of view, we will begin to see the world more realistically. We will begin to make more well-informed decisions, but we probably will not see all of our questions disappear. We will, however, develop a more sophisticated understanding of both our certainties and uncertainties.

GENERALIZATIONS FOR THE TEACHER

Besides encouraging in students an intelligent process of questioning, this chapter suggests the following generalizations:

- We get information about the Soviet Union indirectly through many sources: films, television shows, commercials, advertising, and so on.
- Information about the Soviet Union often is presented very differently from information about other countries.
- Information about the Soviet Union (and most other subjects) is shaped by the values and perspectives of the people who write and publish it, and so it is often difficult to separate facts from interpretation.
- Much of the information we receive about the Soviet Union emphasizes the negative aspects of that country in melodramatic ways.
- It is difficult to get a clear picture of a foreign society, even if one visits or lives in that society.
- The contradictory reports we receive about the Soviet Union are in part a result of the complexity and secretiveness of the Soviet Union itself.

WHAT WE LEARN FROM POLITICAL CARTOONS

OBJECTIVES:
Political cartoons appear in almost every newspaper in the United States, and they appear in the Soviet Union as well. They are a quick source of information for newspaper readers, for these cartoons distill often complex political events into easily understood symbols and caricatures.

The interpretation of political cartoons raises questions about the role and effectiveness of stereotypes. Can stereotypes help us to learn, or do they always distort their subject? Are stereotypes easily challenged, or do they continue to inform opinion in spite of attempts to discredit them? Are the stereotypes in political cartoons healthy or pernicious?

In his book *Difference and Pathology*,[2] Sander Gilman describes two different uses of the stereotype. Gilman sees the stereotype as an inevitable result of our attempt to deal with someone or something unfamiliar—with an "Other." Such stereotypes can serve us well as coping mechanisms, if we allow them to be challenged by subsequent and more complicated experience with this Other. For Gilman, stereotypes only become dangerous when they are used to deny change, to deny subsequent experience that challenges the stereotype.

To what extent do political cartoons play upon our prejudices and reinforce them, and to what extent do they challenge our stereotypes? Is the "shorthand" of the political cartoon merely that—an effective way of summarizing political events—or do these cartoons carry additional psychological weight?

MATERIALS NEEDED: Cartoons (included).

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes).

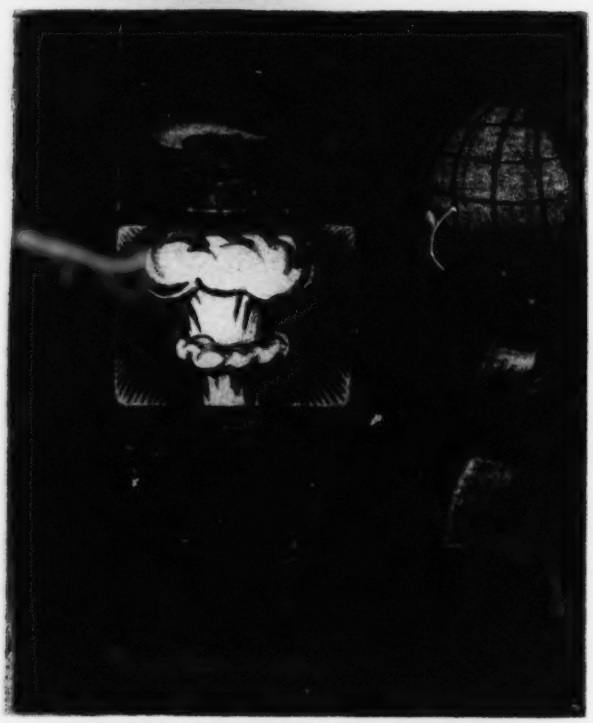
PROCEDURE:
■ Have students examine and discuss the following cartoons, and have them answer the questions below.

■ During the rest of the course, students should examine political cartoons in current newspapers and cut out those that depict political leaders from the Soviet Union and the United States, or that depict political issues between the two countries. These cartoons should be analyzed in class. You may also want

Cartoon A, *Los Angeles Times* (1919) On the Threshold!

Cartoon B, *Newsweek* (1986)

Cartoon C, *Crocodile* (1982)
Automatic Arrangements for Millionaires (document reads "Monopolies' Privileges")



Cartoon D, *Crocodile* (1982)
X-ray

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the class to collect cartoons that depict leaders and events associated with other countries in the world.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Cartoon A, published in the *Los Angeles Times* in 1919, depicts Bolshevism at the threshold of civilization. Discuss with students the way the then-recent Soviet revolution is portrayed in this cartoon. What emblems of barbarism are connected with the Soviet Union?

Cartoon B, published in *Newsweek* in 1986, portrays the enforcement of limits upon freedom of the press in the Soviet Union. Discuss the various garbs and roles of the characters. What conclusions does the cartoonist wish you to make about the nature of the Soviet government?

Cartoon C, published in the Soviet magazine *Crocodile* in 1982, portrays a millionaire putting money into the Capitol building and receiving back privileges. What conclusions does the cartoonist wish for you to make about money and power in the United States?

Cartoon D, published in *Crocodile* in 1982, portrays the United States, in the figure of Ronald Reagan, being given an X-ray by the world. Discuss the way that the United States is attired. What does this cartoon claim about the nature of the United States?

General Questions:

- In what ways do cartoonists portray political leaders from the United States and other countries? How do you feel about the ways these cartoons exaggerate the appearances of political leaders?
- Why do you think people look at political cartoons?
- What do you think is the purpose of political cartoons?
- Are leaders from different countries portrayed differently? Are leaders of America's allies portrayed differently from communist leaders? Are female leaders portrayed differently than male leaders? If there are differences, why do you think they exist?

THE SOVIET UNION IN AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE

OBJECTIVES:
We can learn a great deal about American perceptions of the Soviet Union from American popular culture. The Soviet Union is a frequent subject in television shows, films, rock videos, and so forth. In fact, popular culture may be the single greatest influence upon students' ideas of the Soviet Union and communism.

Teachers and curricula often ignore popular culture as a source for teaching. Teaching materials generally favor print materials (this curriculum is no exception), for the simple reason that teachers do not usually have the budget or equipment to use films, videos, and so forth in the classroom. However, works of popular culture are often so familiar to students that learning can take place even without the original works present. In addition, some materials—for example, televised materials played back on a VCR—are easily brought into the classroom.

Popular culture may be the single greatest influence upon students' ideas of the Soviet Union and communism.

Often, stereotypes in works of popular culture are simplistic. Emphasis on entertainment value—and, one assumes, assumptions about the intelligence of the viewing audience—often means that complex plots, characters, and actions are avoided. Teachers can easily counter these simplistic stereotypes by pointing to the complexity of the issues these stereotypes address. However, the teacher should not allow students to confuse the stereotype and the issue; that is, pointing out the flaws of an extremely obvious right- or left-wing caricature does not serve as an adequate analysis of the political position represented by that caricature.

Teachers should thus attempt to use more complex examples, and when analyzing a simplistic character or plot, teachers can move the class to a discussion of how the stereotype affects the audience, which should create the opportunity for more complicated thinking.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Examples to be determined by the teacher and class.

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes).

PROCEDURE:
■ Discuss with students various stereotypes of the Soviet Union they have encountered in popular culture. (In film, for example, the class might discuss "Gorky Park," "Moscow on the Hudson," "Rambo," "Red Dawn," "White Nights,"

and various James Bond movies.)

■ The class might describe closely a certain character or plot, and then, individually or collectively, rewrite the original to create a more complex version of this character or plot.

Sylvester Stallone's movie character Rocky faces a Soviet boxer in a symbolic faceoff between the two countries.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ How are good and evil represented in the film/tv show/etc.? Which characters personify these forces? Which actions and consequences are considered good? Which are evil?

■ Are the stereotypes consistent throughout the film/tv show/etc.? Are these stereotypes modified by events and actions?

■ Do conflicts, contradictions, or ambiguities exist *within* any of the stereotypes? Do any characters or actions reveal mixed motives?

■ Do any characters symbolize countries, nationalities, or political organizations? Judging from your knowledge, are these symbols accurate? Do any events in the film/tv show/etc. portray real events?

DESCRIPTIONS OF LIFE IN THE SOVIET UNION

OBJECTIVES:
American reports about the Soviet Union are often contradictory. Reporters offer us a variety of impressions that are difficult to evaluate. Given that most of us have little personal experience with the Soviet Union, we are dependent on someone else's interpretation; naturally, we will sometimes be confused and frustrated. This is true even with travelogues, those reports that describe to us what we would see with our own eyes were we traveling in the writer's shoes. Although these accounts encourage us to believe in the neutrality and verity of the tale, we can often discover in travelogues writing that is subtly and unexpectedly persuasive. This activity explores several examples of such writing. Students are asked to examine an article about the weather in the Soviet Union, and two descriptions of Soviet customs from travel books. Students and teachers should in their discussions of these readings begin to develop concepts of neutrality and bias in reporting. These concepts will be explored again in subsequent activities.

We might feel that a solution to the problem of reportage is actually to go to the Soviet Union and see Soviet society with our own eyes. We will then get a much clearer picture of the country. Our own first-hand experience with the Soviet Union will enable us to answer our questions ourselves. Or will it? The final reading in this activity is taken from the diaries of two American students.[3] These students recorded these observations during a trip to the Soviet Union. The diaries show the difficulties encountered in exploring the Soviet Union, even with one's own eyes. Our preconceptions of the Soviet Union even affect our first-hand observations.

Our preconceptions of the Soviet Union even affect our first-hand observations.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Readings (included).

TIME REQUIRED: 3 classroom periods (45 minutes each)—1 period for each reading, if readings are assigned as homework.

PROCEDURE:
■ Have the students read and discuss the following readings. The first reading, "Russian Winter" by George Feifer, appeared in the February 1984 issue of *Reader's Digest*; it is an abridged version of an essay that appeared in *Harper's Magazine*. The second reading is composed of excerpts from the 1982 and 1988 editions of *Fodor's Travel Guide: Soviet Union*. The third reading is composed of excerpts from the diaries of two students who have traveled to the Soviet Union.

1 / ACTIVITY THREE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Reading 1

■ What feeling about the Soviet Union do you get from the article?

■ The author appears to be using the weather to symbolize all Soviet society. Find remarks about the weather that seem to suggest something about Soviet life more generally.

■ Examine the following sentence from the article: "[Winter] is a life sentence to hardship that prowls near the center of the Russian consciousness, whatever the time of year." Discuss the effect of the words and phrases used (e.g., "life sentence," "prowls," etc.).

■ Take any paragraph in the story and make a list of the words that describe life in Russia. What different feelings do these words elicit? Which words are positive? Negative? Emotional? Analytical?

■ Have each student write a two-paragraph description of a place or subject of their choice using words from this story. What things did the students choose to write about?

Reading 2

When discussing the two parts of this reading, teachers should point out the great differences between the two accounts, which appeared in different editions of *Fodor's Travel Guide: Soviet Union*. The account from the 1982 edition paints a very positive picture of the Soviet Union, stressing the hospitality of the Soviet people, and the positive aspects of collective life. The second account, from the 1988 edition, is much less enthusiastic, emphasizing the contradictions in Soviet life, and the problematic condition of the individual in Soviet society.

■ Compare the two accounts of Soviet public experience and city life. Pay attention to the words and images used, and the impressions they convey. Discuss the military images in each account.

■ Compare the description of the working of the collective in the first account with the description of the place of the individual in the second.

■ Compare the way each excerpt treats Soviet hospitality and eating customs. Discuss the different impressions the excerpts convey.

■ Fodor's publications not only provide information, but they also hope to create in the reader the desire to travel to the country discussed. In what ways might this goal have influenced these excerpts?

■ Other publications might also have business interests that influence their choices of subjects and styles of writing. What interests might influence newspapers? Fashion magazines? Sports magazines?

Reading 3

■ How do these diaries make you feel about the Soviet Union?

■ What are some of the things the student liked and disliked?

■ Of the things each student criticized, which ones do you think the Soviet people would consider to be normal?

■ The students make many judgments about the people and places they see. What are a few of these judgments?

■ How do you think you would have reacted if you had been there? Do you think you would have felt differently?

■ Do you think there are parts of your city or state, or parts of the United States, that might seem foreign to you? How might a person's background and way of life influence their perceptions of a certain place?

■ How much about the United States do you think you could communicate to people in the Soviet Union? What might you find difficult to describe?

■ Many other peoples have different patterns of behavior than our own. Recall a time you met a person very different than yourself. Who were they? How did they make you feel? Did you make any discoveries about yourself or about the other person?

■ Has your behavior ever been misunderstood by others? What do you think was the cause of the misunderstanding?

READING ONE:
"RUSSIAN WINTER"

GEORGE FEIFER
"RUSSIAN WINTER," *READER'S DIGEST* 124, NO. 742 (FEBRUARY 1984): 97-100. (CONDENSED FROM *HARPER'S MAGAZINE*)

In Moscow, from October through February, the average daily sunshine is one hour and 15 minutes—compared, for example, with "foggy" London's 2 1/2 hours. From November through January, it is 52 minutes daily. And a fresh dusting of snow seems to fall every few hours, often pushed into faces by raw winds blowing in from the steppes. Yet no matter how many roads it closes and roofs it crushes, snow is child's play compared with the chief curse and main enemy: cold so severe that, as one saying has it, birds freeze in flight. . . .

The difference between Russian cold and the cold that one has known elsewhere, and even enjoyed, lies in the accumulation of hard days and hostile effects. It is the difference between hope and immutability.

The ordeal of a Russian winter, *Russkaya zima*, is not merely a longer, darker, crueler span of time than that which annually slows the countries of Northern Europe and America. It is a life sentence to hardship that prowls near the center of the Russian consciousness, whatever the time of year. As a prime cause and a symbol of Russia's fate, it molds an attitude toward life.

Russian peasants mutter that winter "has a belly on him like a priest, who brought forth nothing from the land, but settled himself at their tables and expected to eat his fill." This voracious feeder arrives early, stays late, exhausts mind, body and nerves. In *Russians as People* (Dutton), Britain's Wright Miller, a close observer of the Russian character, sighs, "Greedy, exhausting

A Soviet schoolgirl's depiction of a winter day.

A Soviet child's drawing of spring.

winter plants himself across Russia as the great waster and consumer—eating away hard-won stores of food and fuel, burning away energy, patience, imagination and the very breath of the people huddled around earthen stoves."

Foreigners who visit Russia in June, July or August—as most tourists and businessmen do—miss the nation's primary angles of vision. During the blissful but fleeting interval when delicate northern green decorates drab cities and the scourge of ponderous clothing is miraculously lifted from shoulders and moods, Russians are likely to seem "pretty much like us."

But the leafy days of warmth and freedom are numbered like secret documents. Impatient winter is rarely made to wait long. In Moscow, snow is not unknown in August. The first lasting frosts, however, appear in late September. The trees are now entirely bare. For seven months, the only foliage, apart from much-loved house plants, will be the dark mantel of the firs. Prefabricated apartment buildings look like cell blocks against the gunmetal sky.

In October, cold rains issue from grim clouds during the day, and the nasty wet freezes overnight. The nearly eight million people who push and plod through Moscow searching for necessities are already in the quilted jackets that will be buttoned around them for most of their waking hours until spring. By the end of the month people are edgy and morose. It is as if the planet has entered some cosmic dismalness.

From November on, few but the political and cultural elite will eat fresh food until spring, except as a holiday treat. Outside Moscow and Leningrad, the monotony of diet and the unhealthfulness—for this surely helps spread the annual influenza epidemics—are far worse. Meat can be virtually unobtainable, and fresh fruit and vegetables, apart from autumn cabbage and carrots, are invisible. The prima ballerina of Perm, an industrial center in the Urals, queues until her feet freeze for a few stunted scallions to supply the vitamins she needs on her performance days.

By mid-December, Russians are weary of their cross. Even the most padded worker hurries to the fire as often as he can. Goods are handled with winter's sloth and clumsiness. Overcoats smell of years of wet and dust. A solid plane of cloud presses remorselessly on the earth. Icicles hanging from cornices and rain gutters seem part of some sinister ancient architecture.

Like labor-camp inmates, the population is treated to occasional cherished gifts. A bright day is polished turquoise; the sparkling air scrubs your lungs; the sun on the snow's crust makes you smile. The sight of Russian children on such days is enchanting. Bundled from head to foot, recognizable as human forms only by the scarves knotted around their necks, they have the red noses and red cheeks of dolls, the squealing laughter, as they pat their snowmen, of forgotten innocence. But such picture-postcard days are as rare as roses in January.

By February, shoulders ache from the weight of the inescapable overcoat. Beyond this palpable weariness lurks a general fatigue produced by the permanent tension of struggling in vain. Now you trudge resentfully through the besieged streets, conscious at each step that this is a land of struggle and hardship. And of procrastination: like so many others, you are less and less willing to take on the dirty ice. You postpone again what you had resolved to accomplish and stay put in your warm shabby nook. . . .

Although some inhabited places are farther north on the map and actually as cold, Russia's numbing heritage of isolation and backwardness makes it more frozen. Russia remains psychologically the most northern of nations.

Thanks at least in part to their climate, Russians perceive the outside world as hostile, and yet enviable too. Going deeper, what is usually shrugged off as "bad luck" can also be seen as punishment; like handicapped children, Russians feel they are "not like the others," and tend to blame themselves for the stigma and hardship.

Much as people living under wartime stress, Russians radiate a powerful we're-in-this-pickle-together fellowship. The greater harshness of winter existence strengthens trust among those who feel it, adds importance and intensity to the "stolen" moments of escape, heightens enjoyment of a luckily procured bag of oranges and of evenings of emotional exchange.

But soothing as it can be to the ubiquitous ache of Russian life, this freer inner life hardly compensates for the political and economic liabilities that accompany it, for all these nothing-really-matters qualities ultimately stem from a conviction that no lasting liberty can be won from the controlling forces. We are doomed, whatever we do.

Russian winter is the song of Russian life: submit, you lost lambs, to your fate of inexplicable hardship. Nothing fundamental will change until the psychic yoke of Russian winter is lifted from this people's outlook, and they surrender the belief that they have been wronged.

READING TWO: Part One
"THE SOVIET WAY OF LIFE: COMPLETELY DIFFERENT BUT ALL TOO HUMAN"

EXCERPT; *FODOR'S TRAVEL GUIDE: SOVIET UNION,* (NEW YORK: FODOR'S MODERN GUIDES, INC., 1982), 61-71.

Politics Unlimited

... [A] closer look almost anywhere reveals signs of the special politicization of public life that is a hallmark of the Soviet Union. Russians themselves have come to take it so much for granted, they barely notice. Commercial advertisements, as westerners know them, have only lately taken toehold, but political advertising is ubiquitous.

Everywhere political slogans gaze down with silent reminders: "The Party and the People Are United," "Long Live the Soviet People, Builders of Communism," or simply, "Glory to Work." The visitor, asking directions, will come across such landmarks as Karl Marx Prospekt, Lenin Prospekt, Fiftieth Anniversary of the Revolution Square, Prospekt Mira (Peace Avenue). Along sidewalks, he will notice Communist Party and government newspapers posted in glass-encased bulletin boards for easy, stand-up reading. Loudspeakers in public parks often provide strollers with martial music or radio broadcasts of speeches and news reports. ...

Another fixture of public life is heroic statuary. In Moscow, the central shrine is the red marble tomb of Lenin on Red Square. In any other city, the central square is presided over by a statue of Lenin, in a wind-furled overcoat, confidently striding towards a brighter future, or, hand raised and eyes agleam, exhorting the proletariat to unite. The energetic civic consciousness of socialist realism is strikingly conveyed in the towering World War II monument in Volgograd, a 93m-tall woman on a hillcrest, symbolizing Mother Russia with sword raised against the foe, her dead prayerfully buried around her, or in the dynamic stainless steel Figures of Communist Construction in Moscow—a muscular young worker, one fist clenched around a hammer and another arm locked with a young collective farm girl wielding a sickle. ...

The Olympian scale of these monuments is an important clue to their public appeal and an insight into the Soviet spirit. People here like awesome structures, impressively broad avenues, sweeping vistas, and images of titanic exploits. They have a Texan's love for exaggerated bigness that seems to outdo even the American love of bigness. With the spirit of Paul Bunyan, Russians take pride in the sheer magnitude of the great hydroelectric dams they have thrown across the broad rivers of Siberia. They revel in the size of their rockets, steel plants or heavy trucks, and marvel at the mass of the mock-Gothic sandcastle skyscrapers erected in their capital city by Stalin. ... "In Russia," a visitor from Eastern Europe once remarked, "even a barbershop is a block long. ..."

... [F]or rituals of national solidarity and loyalty ... Red Square literally becomes a giant outdoor television studio for displaying disciplined, goose-stepping military units and awesome weaponry (though the military side of these displays is nowadays deliberately played down and is some-

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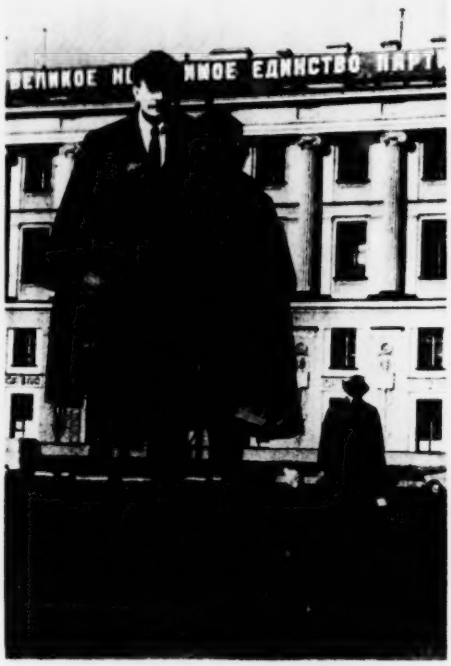


A gigantic figure of Lenin stands over Palace Square to commemorate May Day, an important Soviet holiday.

times entirely absent), or colorful phalanxes of marching, flag-waving, strong-armed youths and the lithe-limbed girl gymnasts doing field figures on a scale that dwarfs the half-time shows of big-time American football games.

Kollektiv-consciousness

On a less exalted plane, probably the most important distinguishing characteristic of the Soviet life-style for the ordinary Ivan Ivanovich Ivanov is the *kollektiv*, the Soviet counterweight to the individualism of the West. Though the *kollektiv* has many forms, the work *kollektiv* assumes the greatest importance for Ivan. Whether he—or his wife Nadya—works in a factory or a collective farm, he becomes an element of a brigade—"an essential link in a chain," the press is fond of saying. Even management and white-collar workers, salesgirls and waiters are inculcated with the spirit of the *kollektiv*. . . . Farm brigades vie with other farm brigades, assembly lines with other assembly lines, shifts with other shifts on a collective basis in what is known as "socialist competition."

If our Ivan lives in a city, his labors and those of his fellow office, factory or university colleagues will be collectively volunteered at least one Sunday in the autumn to go to the countryside to help bring in the potato harvest or loads of cabbages. In the spring, the *kollektivs* of urban and rural workers will participate automatically in the nationwide *subbotnik*, the working Saturday that Ivan and all other Soviet citizens donate free to the welfare of their country.

The work *kollektiv* is infused with more than Communist mystique, hailed in the Party press and glorified in factory dramas on stage. . . . For most ordinary Ivans, the factory or state farm is a paternalistic provider of many services, and works much like the old company town in the West. The factory is not only a place of work but the source of housing, the site of day-care centers for children, neighborhood schools and medical clinics, where services are provided free of charge. Many younger workers live five or six together in communal dormitories. . . .

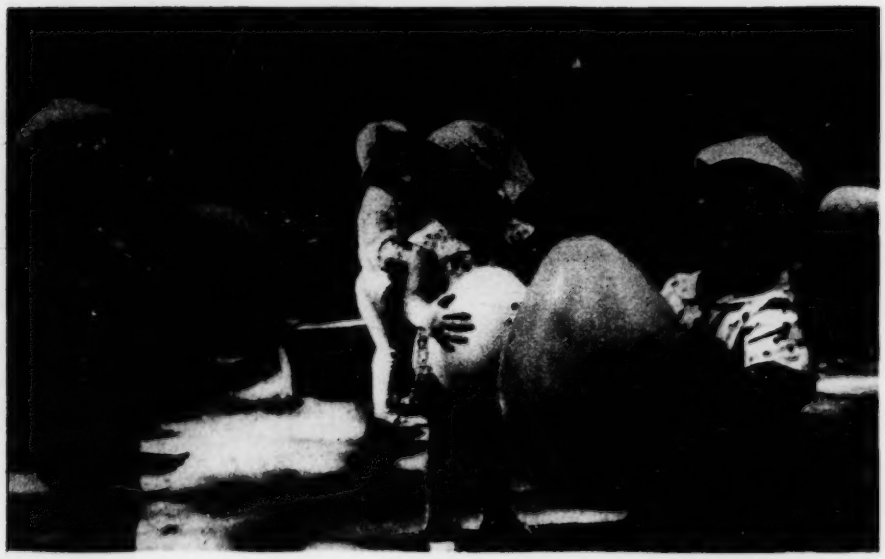
The work *kollektiv* also influences leisure time. It provides a community House of Culture, which sponsors a variety of clubs and guided activities. Many farms, factories, institutes, publishing houses or other public enterprises have their own vacation facilities that can handle part of their work force, and Pioneer camps for the children in summer months. . . .

The paternalism of the *kollektiv* (and ultimately the State) with its free education, free health care and subsidized vacations, is immensely important to most Russians, whatever drawbacks they may experience in practice. To most Soviet citizens, the unemployment, open inflation, high costs of university education and medical care in the West sound very frightening. The free unpredictability of Western life unsettles them. Even at the cost of freedoms, the vast majority of Soviet citizens seem to prefer sheltered communalism to what they regard as unbridled individualism of the West which they do not understand. . . .

The Russians at Play

Meet Russians relaxing, at play or at home, and you find their brusqueness melts away. They are among the warmest, emotional and overwhelmingly hospitable people on earth. They can be as sentimental as the Irish, as straightforward as Americans, as garrulous as Italians. The reverse side of their public fatalism is an almost childish optimism that may account for their doting so on children. Russian families are small, largely out of economic necessity (though big families are common among Caucasian and Central Asian peoples), but on their one child, or sometimes two children, Russians lavish affection and the best clothes, toys and whatever else they can buy. In public, children may be sternly disciplined; but at home, they are a spoiled, privileged class. . . .

Russians love a party and seize upon most holidays and even on the unexpected arrival of a stranger as a pretext. Frugality and planning ahead do not come naturally to them; they live for the moment. So when the occasion arises, they will throw an entire bonus or a huge chunk of pay—more than they can sensibly afford—into a single evening's hospitality and emotional Slavic self-indulgence. They may go out on the town with friends to a restaurant with a loud dance band and fling themselves into bouncy foxtrots, mazurkas, polkas and athletic mutations of the twist, the monkey or some rock-beat numbers, returning periodically to a table well fortified with vodka, cognac or sweet Soviet champagne to keep their party mood afloat. . . .



The factory is not only a place of work but the source of housing, the site of day-care centers for children, neighborhood schools and medical clinics, where services are provided free of charge.

A Russian get-together with food, drink, talk, and music.

. . . [During holiday feasts at home] Russians abandon themselves to the orgy of feasting and drinking with a gusto that echoes the memory of times when food was not so plentiful. With advance warning, the women work for days preparing *zakuski*, the Russian *hors d'oeuvres* that are properly the most celebrated part of a Russian meal. *Zakuski* are never consumed without a string of good-natured and often long-winded toasts, each punctuated by everyone's gulping down a shot-glass of chilled vodka in one go. At such a feast anything and everything is washed down with vodka.

Zukuski are never consumed without a string of good-natured and often long-winded toasts . . .

Even without numbing quantities of alcohol, a visitor can suddenly find himself included within a trusted circle of friends and warmed by roaring Russian hospitality. In cities like Paris or Rome, a foreigner could live for years without penetrating the full intimacy of a French or Italian home, but if luck creates the right circumstances, it can happen within hours in Russia.

When that occurs, the foreigner gains a glimpse of the great importance of friendships to the Russian, in whose life so much is governed by public authority and so little left to personal taste. It is perhaps understandable that Russians both give without moderation and expect others to respond in the same way. There is an intensity in their personal relationships that Westerners find both exhilarating and exhausting. For Russians, when they finally open up, are looking for soul mates, not mere conversational partners. They may feel offended at the circumspection of Westerners, especially intellectuals given to careful reasoning and qualification, and make plain that what they long for is a personal commitment from friends that Westerners rarely accord to more than a very few people in life. . . .

It is this directness in the Russian character, this tendency to startling and direct openness that makes many Americans and some Britons feel that Russians are more like them in some essential way than are sophisticated continental Europeans, restrained Teutonic Germans or temperamental Latins. Russians call this trait of openness their broad spirit (*shirokaya dusha*) and count as one of the glories of life talking *dusha-dushe*—heart-to-heart, or literally, soul-to-soul.

READING TWO: Part Two

"THE SOVIET WAY OF LIFE"

EXCERPT; *FODOR'S SOVIET UNION 1988*
(NEW YORK: FODOR'S MODERN GUIDES, INC., 1988), 53-59.

In most countries, tourists notice a discrepancy between the inhabitants' view of themselves and the outsiders' view. In the Soviet Union this discrepancy strikes one with particular force. It starts with the tourist's first sight of Soviet streets, usually from an Intourist bus. World peace is in the air: slogans on public buildings call for it, guides provide statistics on peace congresses, and at any official meeting, peace is the first toast. Yet military uniforms are everywhere: not just frontier police, security troops and traffic policemen, but dozens of soldiers and officers in uniform among the crowds on the streets, plus frequent lorry-loads of young conscripts. Town war memorials, always shown to tourists with pride, have an eternal flame guarded by young Pioneers and Komsomols carrying real rifles. It is the first example visitors are likely to encounter of the contrast between the insiders' and the outsiders' viewpoints.

To Russians, it is natural and praiseworthy that children should be taught their patriotic duty to defend their country: to Western tourists, Soviet children carrying guns represent only the militarization of the educational system. But no visitor can fail to appreciate the genuine love of their country which is not just taught to children, but felt by Russians in all walks of life. . . .

Despite the high incidence of uniforms, the Soviet street scene is varied and colorful. Outward appearances have changed enormously in the last 20 years: the red-lettered propaganda slogans adorning public buildings have now been joined by Western-type posters advertising State insurance or Aeroflot, tall apartment blocks ring all the main cities in place of the old one-story wooden houses, private cars are increasing in number every year, and no longer can one always tell the foreigners from the natives in the crowds by their dress.

Groups of schoolchildren or young adults constitute a large element in the throngs on the streets—and here what strikes a Western observer is how quiet and well-behaved the teenagers are. Schoolgirls, for instance, in their black overalls with frilly white pinafores for special occasions, look like parlor-maids from the *Upstairs, Downstairs* television series rather than products of a Socialist educational system. Their behavior suits their clothes: giggling and chattering, certainly, but anti-social behavior—practically never. They seem to have a strong corporate sense, the elder children taking responsibility for the public behavior of the younger ones, an attitude their teachers are very anxious to implant in them from their first day at school.

Yet you may also see gangs of adolescent boys loitering in the street or parks at night, and you will certainly notice suspicious characters, mostly young, hanging round the entrances of Intourist hotels hoping to buy jeans or currency from foreign visitors. The Soviet Union, like any other country, is worried about its juvenile crime rate, and it has its share of muggers, burglars and car-stealers, very many of whom are still at school. Every week you can read accounts in the press of such crimes, for which the penalty is usually a stiff prison or reformatory sentence. In 1986 there were 46,000 registered drug addicts.

Just like sociologists in the West, Soviet sociologists' favorite explanation for the activities of these young people is that they often come from broken homes, or have

To Russians, it is natural and praiseworthy that children should be taught their patriotic duty to defend their country; to Western tourists, Soviet children carrying guns represent only the militarization of the education system.

alcoholic parents. A deeper reason may be the sharp change in the attitude towards adolescents by adults, once they have reached the end of childhood.

Children are the privileged class in Soviet society, continually told that the future is theirs, and no effort is spared in fitting them for it . . . [T]hey are surrounded with loving care from parents and teachers, while the State provides nourishing school meals, clothes which are much cheaper than the adult equivalents, summer camps, theater excursions and so on. School lasts for 11 years from the age of six. But at 16, adulthood arrives with a bang: the young person receives his internal passport and, when he or she leaves school, is expected either to compete for a place in a higher educational institution, or to start work. . . . Moreover, at the age of 18 young men are called up for two to three years' military service, unless they can obtain exemption on health or family grounds, or postponement if they are continuing their education. Suddenly the pampered child finds himself without his privileges, treated the same as any other adult citizen and subject to all the stresses and difficulties of everyday life, a transition many young people find hard to accept. . . .

Children are the privileged class in Soviet society, continually told that the future is theirs, and no effort is spared in fitting them for it . . .

Rugged Individualism

It may come as a surprise to foreign visitors to discover that among the Soviet people, whom we may think of as willing or unwilling conformists, there are plenty of individualists, even eccentrics. . . .

We think of Soviet society as regimented but there are many cases of individuals who refuse to conform—and who apparently get away with it. One hears occasionally of religious drop-outs, young people who refuse to work, but go round preaching universal love and brotherhood, living on their followers' charity until the powers-that-be catch up with them. Then there are the poets and painters who take poorly paid posts as night watchmen or train attendants, in order to have time to write or paint. There have even been cases of respectable factory managers who suddenly can bear their lives no longer, resign their posts and go off to hunt bears in the

Siberian forest or to catch fish on Lake Baikal.

Commoner than all these are the town-dwellers who hold down ordinary jobs but in their spare time build themselves a house in some remote village, where they can spend their vacations growing vegetables and picking wild berries. The "Back to Nature" cult has many followers in modern Russia: people trying to escape from the unhealthy atmosphere of many large industrial towns, and families willing to spend their weekends digging to ensure for themselves a regular supply of fresh fruit and vegetables.

Until recently, such devotees of the "good life" used to encounter a lot of opposition from the local authorities, who were unwilling to provide individuals with the building materials, manure or seeds which they needed .... Productivity from private plots, however, is so far above that of the collective (*kolkhozy*) or state (*sovkhozy*) farms, that the Government recently decided to make use of these amateur gardeners and livestock raisers to solve the country's food problems. People are now being encouraged to apply through their place of work for a plot of land outside town....

Family Life and the Fascination of Food

The long-term solution to labor shortages would be a rise in the west Russian population. But here the planners encounter a formidable obstacle: the unwillingness of modern Russian mothers to have more than one child. Couples with no children have to pay six percent of their earnings in the so-called "childless" tax, and couples with one child are subject to a good deal of social pressure in the form of lectures about their patriotic duty to provide more future Soviet citizens. But although maternity leave is generous and crêches [day nurseries] numerous, most women are still reluctant to embark on a large family, much as Russians love children. Indeed, it has been estimated that in central and western Russia, young women are averaging six or seven abortions each (easily arranged, in a State hospital). The chief reason is lack of good living accommodations. Apartments are very cheap to rent, but small and hard to find....

There is also the problem of shopping, which weighs very heavily on the working mother, often consuming all her lunch-hour and delaying her return home at night. Shopping in Russia used to be dominated by the three-line system: a line to order the goods, another line to pay, and a third line to collect.... Fortunately, in the big cities food supermarkets are now appearing, and here things have been speeded up in the Western style. The problem then is, to find a shop where supplies of meat or milk have not run out. Most families resort once a week to the collective farmers' open markets, where fresh produce in a greater variety than the shops provide can be had, though at much higher prices.... [L]ines ... form at street-corner kiosks with lightning speed: only after a considerable wait may the line discover that it's not oranges today, only cabbage....

Despite the shortages however, food is still a great source of enjoyment to modern Russians, and tourists who get invited into any Soviet home will find a variety of dishes on the table: solid vegetable soup (*shchi*), savoury pastries (*pirozhki*), buckwheat porridge (*kasha*), hors d'oeuvres (*zakuski*) and salads with smoked fish of various kinds, marinated mushrooms, pickled cucumbers, jams—and mounds of both black and white bread. All this should traditionally be washed down with vodka when guests are present.... Perhaps because the ingredients for many dishes are hard to come by, people tend to serve them lavishly when they can and guests are expected to eat every last crumb or risk offending their hosts. Many toasts will be drunk at such a gathering, many questions asked—Russians are insatiably curious about foreign customs and opinions—and warm friendships established, for the Russians are still some of the most hospitable and outgoing people in the world.

Couples with no children have to pay six percent of their earnings in the so-called "childless" tax.

READING THREE: Part One:
CHRISSIE D.'S DIARY OF A TRIP TO THE SOVIET UNION, SUMMER 1984

"The troubles of the world make us fall apart. I felt I would cry for days. These are Russians we might murder. This is the country that might go to war. This beautiful, peaceful republic—why?"

FRIDAY: I am going to a country that I am supposed to hate, why am I so happy? ... We are flying over the islands and the sea is all ripply and shimmery. How can it be that Pershing and Cruise missiles would fly over the same area? ... When we got off the plane, M. and I wanted to kiss the ground except when the plane finally stopped, there was a very dirty runway and mud everywhere. ... I ran to hug M. We were jumping up and down when this lady standing next to the soldiers got very angry and pushed us onto the bus. ... We went through Passport Control. Soldiers very stern. They are so young! 16 year old soldiers? They looked through all my stuff, took out all my books and the book on Soviet authors they went bananas with. They ended up taking it away with my passport and visa. Finally they came back and wrote on my white slip all about the book. They said I had to have it going back. Meaning if I lost it or something I would be in trouble. That really shook me up. ... After dinner, M. and I left to go for a walk. Practically as soon as we left the hotel, people asked us to trade. M. and I were hysterical—we couldn't understand anyone! We walked everywhere—if there was a passageway into a courtyard we went in. We were in one development--many apartments and there were grandmothers there with their grandchildren, they were so cute! ... (met some young men) ... they wanted to trade. I said we couldn't. Of course we both ended up trading our bags. They wanted everything—my batteries, my gum, pens, everything.

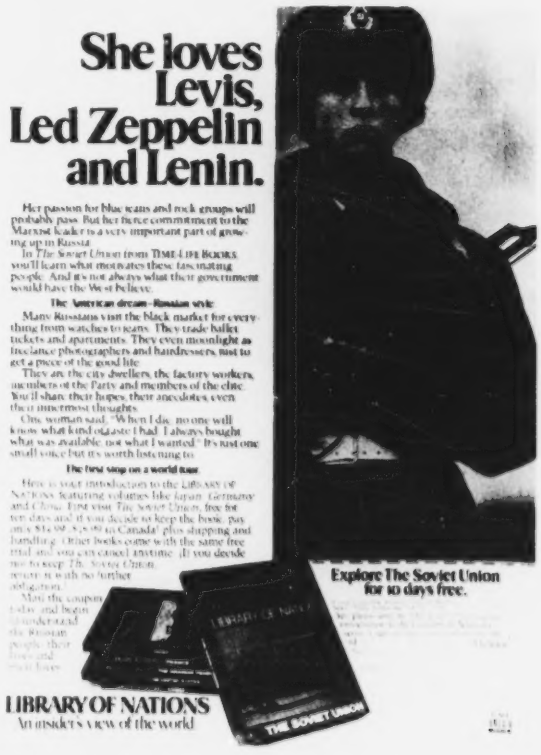
SATURDAY: When we got to the school, they had a program for us with a couple of people telling us about the Young Pioneers, the komsomol and other things. Then they had these little 5th formers who read these essays on why they wanted peace. Most of them were shy and spoke very fast and quietly. ... Then we got to talk to the other kids. The girl loved English—to speak it, write it, anything. ... She told M. where the punks in Leningrad are. We talked about music and school and near the end I asked her what the Soviet people thought about the American people. She answered very quickly, "But there is not difference between the Soviet people and the government." After lunch we walked around a department store and then wandered aimlessly. We managed to buy bread at a bakery, posters at a bookstore and meatcakes off the street, all in Russian. We stood off to the side for the longest time trying to figure out if I had enough change. ... All the fathers were out with their children. It seems as if all Russian fathers take a lot of time to be with their children. I've seen more fathers than mothers! A father came by with his daughter. She kept stopping to look at M's hair and he was so patient. He let her stop as long as she wanted and just smiled. ... The girl from Syria who M. and I met earlier was waiting at the hotel. She is a student of civil engineering. She has been there five years on scholarship. The first year she was so miserable that after only a week she asked for her passport back. They wouldn't give it to her until a year later. Without her visa she couldn't even get to Moscow to the Syrian Consulate. She said the hostels where students live have four students to a room and two toilets to a floor and one kitchen per floor. In the USSR the intelligentsia make less money than the workers—therefore you have to be very dedicated to be a teacher. She said how little we saw of the realities of Soviet life. She said socialism is an ideal in theory, but impossible in reality. When you go shopping she says you have

to be prepared to buy lots of one item in case it is not around for a long time.

TUESDAY: Georgia is different because it is so peaceful. In Leningrad, it was beautiful but all the people wanted was your jeans and your dollars. People seem to interact here much more. A lady on the street asked for gum for her grandchild and then gave us all ice cream. In the airport, J. gave these soldiers peace buttons and they went out and bought her buttons in return. . . . The troubles of the world make us fall apart. I felt like I would cry for days. These are Russians we might murder. This is the country that might go to war. This beautiful, peaceful republic—why?

WEDNESDAY: Peace committee. They take themselves very seriously in these committees. They were very friendly except a few of us got angry at the way the Soviets always infer everything is the fault of the U.S. government. Someone asked why if peace is the policy of the government they need peace committees? The answer was the peace committees were necessary in order to make direct contact with people in ways that governments cannot. . . . Went to open market. People started giving us carrots, chives, parsley and this other stuff that tastes like licorice when you chew it.

SUNDAY: Why do politics exist? People are people. If President Reagan had seen all the people out this last week—washing windows, scrubbing buildings, raking leaves, spreading gravel, turning the dirt in the flower beds, how could he still think the way he does? People here care about their city, their country, each other. Last Friday was the day everyone works for free—donating their time to the country. Last year, they built a health center with the money raised in Moscow. . . . I think what I will remember most about this country is the fathers in uniform walking with their daughters in the parks or teaching their children how to ride bicycles in Red Square, or the babushka who gave us fruit in the markets, ice cream in Tbilisi or hugs in Moscow, and the old lady outside the peace committee who told us she loves us all and if her son was there "he would want us all." We all got slightly hysterical when she told us that, but she just stood there smiling.


She loves Levis, Led Zeppelin and Lenin.
Her passion for blue jeans and rock groups will probably pass. But her fierce commitment to the Marxist leader is a very important part of growing up in Russia.
In The Soviet Union from TIME-LIFE BOOKS, you'll learn what motivates these fascinating people. And it's not always what their government would have the West believe.
The American dream—Russian style
Many Russians visit the black market for everything from watches to jeans. They trade ballet tickets and apartments. They even moonlight as freelance photographers and hairdressers, just to get a piece of the good life.
They are the city dwellers, the factory workers, members of the Party and members of the elite. You'll share their hopes, their anecdotes, even their innermost thoughts.
One woman said, "When I die, no one will know what kind of taste I had. I always bought what was available, not what I wanted." It's not one small voice but it's worth listening to.
The first step on a world tour.
Explore The Soviet Union for 10 days free.
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THE SOVIET UNION

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Part Two:

JENNIFER M.'S DIARY OF HER TRIP TO THE SOVIET UNION, SUMMER 1984

"How can you go against your leader? That's like not trusting your mother or something."

We finally got out of customs. We drove from there to the hotel. All the cars are the same except the people decorate the chairs in the inside of the car with material, etc. The people here all seem so cold except for a smile here and there, and the man at Customs gave you looks that would kill and everyone was so intimidating. The housing isn't nice at all and all the people dress *so* differently.... At dinner, three waiters came up and asked Mr. D. if we wanted to exchange money or sell Walkmans, etc. It was really kinda sad.... People usually walk together in twos or fours holding hands, even women. This is when they smile. It's almost like they find pleasure in each other, but because it can't be found elsewhere. I smiled at a little girl on the Metro and she looked at me and didn't even crack a smile. Très strange and disturbing. Everyone gave us funny looks. It felt so strange to be the minority *and* not having English be the language.

NEXT DAY: We went to Red Square and saw the Kremlin and the churches.... We also had a tour of the city which is really nice. N. was going on and on about her country. B.S. mostly. Lunch was soup, cucumbers and horsemeat, but we did get soda and then went to this science exhibition with more propaganda but it was really pretty. By this time my eyes were possibly permanently crossed. We asked two little kids how to get to Red Square because they knew that our hotel was near Red Square and we gave them a pack of gum—they were *so* excited. It's bad because people really beg literally for gum, etc.... We met these boys. One is a skier and *so* nice. They all are. They insisted on carrying all of our bags, paying for sodas and the Metro, etc. It was *so* sad saying bye. We said we would write, etc. and they're gonna send pictures, etc.

FRIDAY: Sochi. We arrived here yesterday just in time for a swim. The water here is very clear. Everyone wears bikinis and all and I feel so weird in our one-pieces. J. has met these guys who are trading hats for old sneakers and frisbees. We got dropped off at the marketplace—this scummy place. They kept wanting to buy stuff of ours.... We flew to a Pioneer camp. 300 kids and the lady who was the head of the camp was so funny, she was constantly laughing and she was cute and pudgy. We played chess, ping-pong and badminton with some of the children. It was funny, strange, because they had some of their best players playing and they took it really seriously which was kinda creepy. We saw their parade and it was one of the creepiest experiences of my life. It was kinda like the Lord of the Flies or Hitler children. There were drums, marching and saluting, lifting flags. And it was children, little cute children. It could have been any child standing there saluting Lenin and the flag. Who's to say if I had been born there I wouldn't do what those children did? It's very intricate and difficult to express. It's so hot and I feel really gross and want my own pillow, etc. and a shower that's normal. I'm now sitting at the airport staring at a man without an arm....

Last night I had to go and fetch B's shirt and socks that were blown off the back porch. The desk lady and doorman let us walk by without our passes. And we thought about it and the reason this type of system could never work is because it's dealing with people, not machines and no matter how hard they try to stifle it, there is a humanness that comes out.... Some of the

houses people live in couldn't be considered houses, more like huts. There is very little frivolous spending. It's not that the people don't have money. I think it's more that there really isn't anything to spend their money on. . . . Some of the people you meet are so hungry for books, etc. Like the waiter in Moscow who begged for a magazine, and others who want jeans.

It's so stupid that more people don't speak Russian in America, and visa versa. Russians speak English. We really have no understanding of one another and maybe the problem has a lot to do with the fact that we can't communicate. As Y. said, we like the American people but the government—thumbs down. Especially for Reagan. T's friend said they really do feed the bull in the newspapers. Once he read about all of these bombs and it wasn't even a bomb but a threat. The scariest thing is that it's so easy to fall into the trap that's set. How can you go against your leader? That's like not trusting your mother or something. It gets to the point where you don't know who to trust, and you kinda wonder who's being brainwashed. It's really confusing and scary when you don't know who to trust. Can you imagine finding out all the history you were told was wrong or something like that?

Here I am in Armenia. . . . We got at the airport yesterday, if you could call it an airport. It was awful. I went to the bathroom—it was so disgusting flies everywhere and newspaper for toilet paper. Gag me. Never again will I complain about a disgusting bathroom because I was in the worst in the world. I felt like I was in the movie "The Year of Living Dangerously." Here I am in Armenia. This place is so different from Moscow and Sochi. Very depressing. T. and I took a walk. It was so awful, so many of the houses are awful and this is the capital of Armenia. We got ice cream at this store and the lady wanted to know about Boston. We went back tonight and gave her a card of Boston cause she got so excited about it. These people all seem to want to leave. Lenin just doesn't fit here.

Yerevan— . . . . The men really look you over. Yuk. J. and I gave a little kid gum. He started to dance he was so happy. The area outside the city is totally different, very barren, hardly any trees and mountains everywhere. These village boys gave us apples for gum. The village was très gross—old ugly sheep and goats, etc. But the view was incredible.

I've been in Leningrad for two days. I love it. We went to the Winter Palace and the Hermitage. It was the most beautiful place I've ever seen. I loved the impressionist painting.

Now I'm in Tallinn. It was overcast and *cold*. Had three layers of clothes on and was still cold. Mr. D's friend that we met in Leningrad and went to the disco with was the sweetest thing. She gave both A. and myself gifts. She gave A. a most gorgeous light blue lace collar and she gave me a *beautiful* ballet book. It was so nice I started to cry and so did A. The weird thing is we didn't even really know the lady, but it was so sad to think we would never see her again. I really love my book so much and will keep it forever. It is one of the neatest gifts I've ever received. We went to an old castle and drank a mixture of apple juice and yogurt. Yuk. It kinda tasted like malted barf. Tallinn is very European though and nicer than most of the other towns.

1 / ACTIVITY FOUR

SURVEYING NEWS ARTICLES PUBLISHED ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION

OBJECTIVES:

Earlier lessons examined the ways language is used in specific articles to describe Soviet leaders and Soviet society. But our perceptions of the Soviet Union are also shaped by the *range* of subjects written about the Soviet Union. This lesson will examine the aspects of Soviet life selected for news reports in American newspapers; in this way, students can determine the extent to which editorial approaches create an impression of a country.

The New York Times is commonly regarded as one of the best newspapers in the world. Of all American papers, it is considered to have the most comprehensive coverage of foreign affairs. This activity will lead students through a survey of what *The New York Times* printed about the Soviet Union in a chosen single year. Students will each be assigned to analyze articles published in a year and to classify these articles by types. A classification scheme is suggested below. This framework for analysis centers upon an evaluation of positive and negative reports of Soviet life. It is, however, an open question whether a given topic is "positive" or "negative." In fact, discussing the criteria for evaluating an article should be part of the exercise.

Classification scheme:

- Articles that report positive aspects of Soviet life
  - Political achievements
  - Awards and celebrations
  - Scientific, athletic, or technical breakthroughs
  - Others
- Articles that report negative aspects of Soviet life
  - Human rights issues (including the circumstances of dissidents)
  - Economic problems
  - Military issues
  - Others
- Articles that can be classified as both negative and positive
- Articles that cannot be classified

MATERIALS NEEDED:
To prepare for this exercise, teachers should reproduce for students the index of articles published about the Soviet Union in a given year in *The New York Times*. Articles are listed in *The New York Times Index*, published semimonthly and available at many public and university libraries. (The offices of *The New York Times Index* are located at 229 W. 43rd St., New York, NY 10036.) The *Index* contains abstracts of the significant news, editorial matter, and features in *The New York Times*. It provides a basic chronological overview of the news, and acts as a guide to the location of the full articles in the original newspaper.

Teachers may want to use the *Index* of articles from the most recent year, or choose a year from a particularly controversial period in recent American/Soviet relations. (For instance, 1981–82 would help students analyze the heightened tensions between the two countries that accompanied the then-new policies of the Reagan administration.) Teachers may also want to perform this activity twice with the class, using indexes from two different years, and compare the results.

Also needed are copies of the categorization chart included here.

TIME REQUIRED: 1-2 classroom periods (45 minutes each), depending upon how much of this activity is done in class.

PROCEDURE:
■ Count the number of pages to the index. Divide the class into an equal number of groups and distribute one page of the index to each group. Each student should receive his or her own copy. Ask the students, possibly as homework, to look at the classification chart and to assign each indexed article to one of the four categories given. You may want to copy the categorization chart included here.

■ Students should first examine the index, decide in which category an article seems to fit, then, on the index itself next to the particular article, put the number of the appropriate category (for example, "1" for a positive article, "2" for a negative one). On the separate tally sheet, the student should keep track of the number of articles in each category. For the articles that students are uncertain about, they should write a question mark next to the index entry of the article, and then put a tally mark in the appropriate category on the tally sheet.

■ Later in the classroom discussion, teachers should select a few of the most interesting "question-marked" articles and explore with the students the possible categorizations of these articles.

■ Once the tallying is completed, a student from each group should put that group's totals on the board. The class should then compile a grand total by adding the subtotals of each group. Examine the results of the survey.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ Which subjects are discussed most frequently in the articles published? Can you get an idea as to why these subjects predominate?

■ Are the articles mostly positive, negative, or mixed between the two? Why do you believe this is so? Were there any particular events during the time you have studied that might have affected this balance?

■ Does the newspaper emphasize sensational events or not?

■ Is there an emphasis on "human interest" stories?

■ Examine the articles published about dissidents. Is there a general direction to these reports, or are there recurring themes?

■ Examine the articles that discuss Soviet military activities. How many discuss activities between the United States and the Soviet Union? How many between the Soviet Union and other countries? How many emphasize the Soviet Union as a threat?

1 / ACTIVITY FIVE

HOW LEADERS CAN BE PORTRAYED

OBJECTIVES:
We generally believe that the mass media provides us with neutral information. But the language used in news reports also has a great influence upon our opinions. News reports provide a lens through which we see the world, but this lens is colored--the very words chosen by the reporter often color our interpretation of the facts. For example, a writer could describe the success of a rock star in several different ways: "Madonna has become the most sensuous, successful, and best-selling pop star in years." Or: "Madonna, dressed like a tramp, exploiting her looks, has managed to convince gullible teenagers to buy her records." Or: "Madonna, a victim in a sexist culture, has had to exploit her looks and sexuality to become a star." Or: "Madonna, aware of the sexism of our culture, has created an image that exaggerates and satirizes this sexism." People with different perspectives and interests can describe the same situation or subject using very different words.

We can apply this concept to reportage about the Soviet Union by considering a description of the life of Leonid Brezhnev, leader of the Soviet Union for nearly 18 years. When he died in 1982, there was much written about him and his country. The following activity will examine a report about Brezhnev that appeared in *Time* magazine. Through this report, we will examine how our perceptions of the Soviet Union can be influenced by the words of the reporter.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included).

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes), if reading is assigned as homework.

PROCEDURE:
■ Read the accompanying article that appeared in *Time* magazine on the occasion of Leonid Brezhnev's death. Discuss this reading with the class.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
■ How is Brezhnev's physical appearance described? What impression does this give you?

■ What words and phrases are used to describe Brezhnev's personality? Make a list on the board. What stories are recounted as proof of his personality? What overall impression do you get about the leader?

■ What words and phrases are used to describe Brezhnev as a politician? Again, what impression do you receive?

■ What political accomplishments are credited to Brezhnev? What failures?

■ In summary, what do you think is the most important message the writer wanted to convey to the reader?

■ The article's title points out two sides to Brezhnev: caution and opportunism. Are any other "splits" described in Brezhnev's personality? Do you think the writer has emphasized these splits for any reason?

Leaders often are taken as symbols of their country.

■ Leaders are often taken as symbols of their country. Consider for a moment that the writer of this article may have intended Brezhnev to symbolize all of the Soviet people. What conclusions would you draw about the Soviet people on the basis of this article?

■ Ask students to select a person whom they think symbolizes the U.S. List nominations on the board. Ask students if they can all agree that the same person best symbolizes the country. If they cannot, discuss why not. If students do select one person, or if they narrow the list to just a few, list the words they think describe that person (or persons). Examining the list of descriptive words on the board, ask students if they think there are other important characteristics of the country that are not a part of the list. Consider characteristics of nationality, ethnicity, gender, economic standing, education, temperament, and so forth.

READING:
"A MIX OF CAUTION AND OPTIMISM"

PATRICIA BLAKE
TIME MAGAZINE, 22 NOVEMBER, 1982.

In his 76th year, Leonid Ilyich Brehznev possessed more power than any other individual on earth. He held undisputed authority as President of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and General Secretary of the Communist Party. In the twilight of a political career that virtually spanned the history of the Soviet Union, he accumulated extraordinary honors. Although his contributions to the Red Army's wartime efforts were largely limited to political propagandizing, he gained the exalted rank of Marshal of the Soviet Union. He was the only Russian in history to have been decorated with five gold stars as a Hero of the Soviet Union and of Socialist Labor, his country's equivalent of both the Congressional Medal of Honor and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Brezhnev's colleagues in the Politburo had even been known to refer to him as *vozhd* (roughly, great leader), a title previously given only to Lenin and Stalin. . . .

. . . As in Stalin's last years, Kremlin iconographers labored to hide the ravages of age and disease. His portraits were meticulously airbrushed to darken his gray hair, to erase his wrinkles, to sharpen his jawline. Sound engineers who monitored his broadcasts used electronic magic to mask his slurred speech, possibly the result of a stroke. The disguises fell through when Brezhnev was placed in the harsh glare of cameras that could not be controlled by party discipline. At his meeting with President Carter in Vienna in June 1979, he stumbled and nearly fell while descending a flight of stairs. On his trip to West Germany in November 1981, he was followed everywhere by two ambulances. His jaw was seen to hang slackly, and his breathing was labored. When he wearied during discussions with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, he retired with a doctor to an adjoining room, presumably for an injection. He was even denied his favorite pick-me-up. Offered liquor at a state banquet, he dutifully refused it in favor of a medicinal concoction proffered by an aide.

Brezhnev had been plagued by illness since 1974. He suffered from heart disease. The list of maladies he was suspected of having included leukemia, cancer of the jaw, gout, emphysema and circulatory ailments. Several times during the past eight years, rumors of his death had swept through Western capitals after a faltering appearance or an unexpected absence from a meeting demanded by protocol. But in recent months he kept to a rigorous schedule of events. He even braved freezing temperatures for two hours early last week to review a Red Square parade. Thus the official announcement of his death three days later took Kremlin watchers by surprise.

As far as the Soviet people were concerned, Brezhnev probably did deserve the title *vozhd*. In numerous respects, he compared favorably with his predecessors, even though his virtues were perhaps best expressed in negative terms. He was not a cold-blooded fanatic like Lenin. He was not a bloodthirsty tyrant like Stalin. He was not a capricious, mercurial improviser like Khrushchev. To his credit, Brezhnev gave his nation almost two decades of relative stability without resorting to the insane bloodletting and midnight terror of the Stalin era. To be sure, he saw to it that dissidence was stifled, and there was no dilution of the power of the secret police. But the average Soviet citizen no longer had to fear

that his life would be destroyed by arbitrary condemnation to inhuman Gulags. To the tens of thousands of apparatchiks in the enormous, tentacular Soviet bureaucracies, Brezhnev's long reign provided much desired security, so much so that the Communist Party has come under the rule of a gerontocracy.

On the international scene, Brezhnev presided over the realization of his country's most cherished hope: the achievement of strategic parity with the U.S. Having emerged as a nuclear superpower under Brezhnev, the Soviet Union was in a position to wield considerably greater influence in foreign relations. Leading from strength, Brezhnev was able to guide his country into an unprecedented era of détente with the West, and he espoused U.S.-Soviet talks on nuclear arms limitations. A cornerstone of Soviet strategy, détente held out the promise of great trade benefits and the opportunity to extend Soviet influence farther with little risk of confrontation with the U.S. or its allies. At the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Brezhnev obtained long-sought legitimization of Soviet rule over its empire. Under his aegis, Moscow ruthlessly reinforced its hegemony over Eastern Europe. But nearly three years before his death, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan dealt an apparently mortal blow to the détente he had once fostered.

At home, Brezhnev proved to be an ultracautious administrator who was reluctant to undertake any fundamental economic reforms, no matter how urgently needed. Because of his conservatism and his diversion of vast resources to the military, the Soviet people have been denied the full social and economic benefits that are enjoyed in other modern industrial societies. During his long tenure, the country's finest natural and human resources were thrown into the development and deployment of weapons. Until the late 1970s, the Brezhnev regime was also able to raise the standard of living of the Soviet people at a rapid rate. But though Brezhnev substantially improved the quality and quantity of consumer goods, he failed to supply the national economy with the large-scale investment needed for long-term growth. The slowdown in the growth of the gross national product that began in Brezhnev's last years is expected to continue for the rest of the 1980s.

Ironically, Brezhnev's most conspicuous failure was in agriculture, where he tried hardest. In spite of an outsize 33% share of total Soviet investment—far higher than the figure for any other industrial country—agriculture has become such a fiasco that the embarrassed Soviets have ceased publishing figures on grain production. During Brezhnev's final years of rule, the country was bedeviled by acute shortages of meat, butter and cheese. Of course, Brezhnev cannot be blamed for the Soviet Union's periodic bouts of bad weather. But other problems plaguing the country's farms proved endemic under his rule: poor distribution, widespread mismanagement, inefficiency and waste, and a woeful lack of incentives for collective farmers to work harder.

...[U]ntil his exuberant style was curbed by age and infirmity, Brezhnev was a man somewhat larger than life: he projected a physical magnetism that fairly overwhelmed many of his fellow statemen in the West. In his second volume of memoirs, Henry Kissinger described Brezhnev's "split personality": he was "alternatively boastful and insecure, belligerent and mellow." Former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt thought that Brezhnev was "quasi-Mediterranean in his movements when he warmed to a conversation." Unquestionably, he had a zest for life. Until illness intervened, he smoked incessantly and drank vodka toast after vodka toast without showing so much as a sign of weakness. Richard Nixon was impressed, unfavorably, by Brezhnev's love of dirty jokes and his earthy humor, characteristics that Brezhnev shared with Khrushchev.

Brezhnev enjoyed entertaining foreign visitors at his dacha outside Moscow, where he could display his prowess as a hunter, and at his luxurious summer home in Yalta,

where the Olympic-size swimming pool was shielded from the wind by thick glass walls that glided back and forth at the press of a button. Early on, he spoke to state visitors of his interest in splashy automobiles. Taking the hint, they plied him with examples of the motorized best that Western technology could offer. Brezhnev was a notoriously bad driver; yet at one time his stable included a Rolls-Royce, a Citroen-Maserati and a Mercedes-Benz 450 SLC. And Nixon remembers giving a Lincoln Continental to Brezhnev at Camp David. Brezhnev's eyes shone when he saw the car. Without warning, he waved Nixon into the front seat, took the wheel and roared off as Secret Service men looked on aghast. He and Nixon hurtled down a narrow, twisting Catoctin Mountain road at high speed, ran a STOP sign at the bottom of the hill and careened out onto a highway, Brezhnev looking neither right nor left. "That," said a shaken Nixon afterward, "was something."

Brezhnev loved gifts and gadgets of all kinds. When he took a particular shine to a gold Rolex, word was given to its Swiss makers, and before long the watch found its way to his thick wrist. Gerald Ford remembers how, on his way to Vladivostok for a meeting on strategic arms limitations in 1974, he was given a wolfskin coat during a stop in Alaska. When Ford stepped off Air Force One in the frozen remoteness of Vladivostok, a waiting Brezhnev immediately spied the coat. He pulled it off the President, tried it on and walked away with it at the end of the talks after jamming a fur hat down over Ford's ears. It was, by Brezhnev's standards, a fair trade.

"He likes beautiful cars," Nixon once told Television Interviewer David Frost, "and he likes beautiful women." Nixon vividly recalls the procession of women who followed in Brezhnev's wake when he visited the summer White House at San Clemente, Calif., in 1973. Women often appreciated his bantering flattery. After dining with the Soviet leader, Norwegian Actress Liv Ullmann gushed that "Brezhnev looks a little vain, but I feel an immediate liking for him when he takes my hand and tells me that he loved *The Emigrants* [her 1972 film]." Brandt's wife Rut was also taken by his gallantry. On his first state visit to West Germany, in 1973, Brezhnev kissed her hand and said, "You are the first person I am going to invite to Moscow." Cozying up beside her on a sofa, he promised that "all Moscow will lie at your feet," as a gaggle of diplomats listened with fascination. In spite of his flirtatious ways, he enjoyed a stable relationship with his wife Victoria, and he doted on his three grandchildren and one great-grandchild. . . .

The son of a Russian metalworker, Brezhnev was born in the Ukrainian industrial town of Kamenskoye (now known as Dneprodzerzhinsk). . . . After vocational school, one of his first jobs was to help supervise the distribution of land in the Urals that had been seized from peasants as part of Stalin's brutal collectivization program. Brezhnev became a member of the Communist Party in 1931 and subsequently an apparatchik holding a succession of dreary but important jobs that led to the post of deputy chairman of the local city government and finally to a regional party committee membership. On his way up the bureaucratic ladder, he earned a degree in engineering. Somehow he escaped the great purges of 1937–38 that sent tens of thousands of party officials to their deaths. Whether he actively took part in those purges is unclear. Harvard Sovietologist Adam Ulam concludes that Brezhnev was "clever as well as lucky; at a time when people in the party hierarchy were being liquidated right and left, he not only survived but prospered."

When World War II began . . . [Brezhnev's] superior was Nikita Khrushchev, then party boss of the area. Brezhnev became part of a fast-rising cadre of officials who came to be known in the West as the "Ukrainian Mafia." . . .

After the war Brezhnev rose steadily in the Ukrainian party organization as a protege of Khrushchev's; he followed his mentor to Moscow in the early '50s, and was subsequently dispatched to a key job in Kazakhstan. Brezhnev helped administer Khrushchev's costly "virgin lands" program,

Nixon and Brezhnev on the South Porch of the White House, 1973.

aimed at increasing the harvests in Central Asia and Siberia, and was lucky enough to be able to proclaim a bumper wheat crop for 1956. In 1960 he succeeded Marshal Kliment Voroshilov in the post of Soviet President. Brezhnev took advantage of the undemanding job to travel widely outside the U.S.S.R. as a spokesman for Khrushchev's foreign policy. In 1964 he was a member of the conspiracy against his former mentor that forced Khrushchev into retirement. Brezhnev's reward: the high-ranking post of First Secretary of the Communist Party. In 1966 Brezhnev assumed the grander title of General Secretary that had been adopted by Stalin.

. . . Initially, Brezhnev shared authority in a triumvirate with Premier Alexei Kosygin and President Nikolai Podgorny. By 1973 he had elbowed aside any rivals for power. He placed allies in principal positions in the party hierarchy and increasingly emerged as chief spokesman for the Politburo. On trips abroad he was treated as head of state, even though he did not formally assume that title again until after Podgorny's dismissal in 1977.

Brezhnev, at first with Kosygin's assistance, began dismantling many of Krushchev's more quixotic experiments, especially those that weakened the power of the Communist Party. Restrictions on private farming were eased, and wages were increased. At the same time, Brezhnev subtly moved . . . toward . . . policies that were reminiscent of the Stalin years. Arrests and deportations gradually extinguished the dissident movement. Some future historians may mark Brezhnev's expulsion in 1974 of Nobel-prize-winning Novelist Alexander Solzhenitsyn as one of the most significant events of the Soviet leader's . . . reign.

Brezhnev's decision to invade Afghanistan with 80,000 Soviet troops in December 1979 constituted a major change in Soviet policy. Not since 1945 had the Soviet army been used to impose the Kremlin's will on a foreign country that had not previously been under Soviet control. Brezhnev and his colleagues in the Politburo underestimated the extent of Western reaction. The U.S. and more than 30 other countries boycotted the Moscow Olympics in the summer of 1980, much to the Soviets' discomfiture. Economic sanctions imposed as a result of the invasion curtailed U.S.-Soviet trade. Relations with the U.S. worsened after General Wojciech Jaruzelski imposed martial law in Poland last December with the Kremlin's backing.

The suppression of the Solidarity trade union in Poland reflected Brezhnev's innate duality. Though he doubtless aspired to be remembered as a man of peace, he was also proud to be the creator of the "Brezhnev doctrine," which was used to justify the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 in the cause of preserving Communism. Neither Brezhnev nor his comrades in the Politburo could accept the movements for change in Poland that sprang from the very working people they claimed to represent. . . .

Militarily, the Soviet Union has never been stronger. Moscow is likely to maintain at least nuclear parity with the U.S. for years to come; meanwhile, the U.S.S.R.'s dominance in conventional weaponry is unchallenged. Thanks partly to military intervention by such client states as Cuba, East Germany and Viet Nam, the Moscow brand of Communism has gained fresh footholds in Central America, Africa, the Far East and Southwest Asia. But Brezhnev was unable to patch up Moscow's quarrel with Peking, even after the death of Mao Tse-tung.

Though Brezhnev's proudest legacy is one of vast military might, he wielded that power with care until the close of his reign. The invasion of Afghanistan represented a shift in Brezhnev's characteristic course, and strained relations with the West. Days before his death, the man who had fostered détente warned that Soviet armed strength was the only way to deter "hot-head imperialists." Will his heirs revert to Brezhnev's earlier caution? Or will they prove increasingly imprudent, exploiting targets of opportunity in the Middle East and other vital areas of U.S. interest? If that happens, Americans might have cause to look back on the Brezhnev era with something approaching nostalgia.

EDITORIAL DECISION-MAKING

OBJECTIVES:
To some extent, our understanding of the Soviet Union is affected by the decisions made by editors. Often space is limited in newspapers, and editors must choose one story over another. Other times, a story may be ignored or emphasized to conform to a point-of-view the paper wishes to project (be this point of view "right," "left," or "balanced"). Economic and political influences beyond the newsroom may also affect editorial decisions.

Certainly students cannot gain a full understanding of the politics of media production without a full analysis of the subject—an analysis not offered in detail by this curriculum. However, students can gain a partial understanding of the decisions that affect newspaper content by making editorial decisions themselves.

MATERIALS NEEDED: None.

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes).

PROCEDURE:

■ As homework, have each student imagine that they are the editor of a major American newspaper. One day, one of the paper's reporters in Moscow sends in two stories. One story describes a new program that has been created to enable young Soviet couples to build their own homes, using government supplied equipment and materials. This program has enabled new housing to be completed better and more quickly, and young people involved are very happy with the program. The other story explains how a person who has applied to emigrate from the Soviet Union has been fired from his job. The story recounts the protests made by this person against his firing, and the story also reports that the KGB has tapped the person's phone. Teachers may want to take extra time and actually have students (individually or in groups) write these two stories. Teachers may also decide to use two very different articles actually published about the Soviet Union—one pro, one con.

■ Tell the students they each must decide which story they will print. They can only print one. Which story will they print? Why?

■ Which article do they think readers might be most interested to read? On what basis do they believe this to be true?

1 / ACTIVITY SIX

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■ Which of the two stories might be most important? Which might provide the information people most need to know about the Soviet Union? Why?

■ Have students write several headlines for the story they have chosen. Which headline do they think works best? Why? You may want to have the class bring in various headlines for comparison, or show the class various headline approaches (comparing, say, *The New York Times* with the *New York Post*).

Students should understand that the same facts can be reported in many different ways; the same story may be given widely different interpretations in different newspapers (even in the *same* newspaper). Headlines are one tool newspapers use to aid in interpretation. Students should realize that headlines can be more that just capsule descriptions of the stories that follow them. Headlines can also reflect the point-of-view of the writer or editor. Here are several cases of headlines that describe the same event or story but that are contradictory. You might use them to point out the problem of bias in news reporting.

Example One:
"Gorbachev Avows a Need for Peace to Pursue Reform"
(*The New York Times*, 17 February 1987)
"Nothing New from Gorbachev" (*USA Today*, same day)

Example Two:
"A Lead in Polls Could Be a Trap for Dukakis" (*Los Angeles Times*, 22 May 1988)
"Between the Lines, Latest Polls Warn of Disaster for Bush" (same paper, same day)

Example Three:
"Cocaine on Wane" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 18 January 1988)
"Alas For Parents—Now It's Cocaine" (same paper, same day, same page)

Example Four:
"Danish Voters Support NATO Pact" (*Washington Post*, 11 May 1988)
"NATO Foes Lead in Cloudy Danish Vote" (*The New York Times*, same day)
"Denmark Election Produces a Puzzle" (*Washington Times*, same day)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ Divide the students into "editorial boards" (size to be determined by teacher) to discuss the various choices that might be made. Have the students work to achieve a consensus or majority opinion about which of the two stories to print. Then have a class discussion about the decisions made by each group.

2

COMMUNISM

Railway crossing hut decorated by worker.

2
COMMUNISM

INTRODUCTION

The task of defining communism is complicated by the need to distinguish between the ideal meanings of the word, the many applications of this philosophy, and the various stereotypes about communism that exist in the popular imagination. Which communism are we speaking about? Communism is first of all a philosophical theory formulated long before the existence of the Soviet Union. Communism is also the ruling political philosophy of the USSR; use of this philosophy by the Soviet Union has changed over the century. Communism has also been used in the name of political parties in many countries in the past, including the Communist Party of the United States during the 1920s and 1930s; the word also applies to several present-day parties, primarily in European countries. These various "communisms" are not the same; they vary significantly according to historical and social context.

Communism is first of all a philosophical theory formulated long before the existence of the Soviet Union.

It is, however, absolutely essential that we arrive at a detailed and responsible definition of communism—at least, that we strive to understand the "communism" that worries most Americans. American experience has been shaped in countless ways by our feelings about communism, by both legitimate and exaggerated fears. Our perceptions of communism, and our relationship to the Soviet Union, have had profound effects upon our country's military and domestic policies, on budgets, on education, and on cultural life.

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Thus we need to examine communism carefully, both as an ideal and as an applied and historical political practice. We need to understand communism both as it serves as a rationale for Soviet behavior, and as it exists separately from the Soviet Union. Certainly, a significant part of this process involves comparing communism and democracy, and the Soviet Union and the United States—the Soviet Union is of course the primary example of communist philosophy in practice. But we must also be willing to

discuss definitions of communism without automatically calling up our antagonism toward the USSR. Other forms of analysis besides simple comparison must be allowed to flourish in the classroom. To put this in a different way, the authors believe that existing communist societies are worthy of serious study, rather than immediate dismissal. We believe that such serious investigation will not damage students' capacity for judgments, but will instead help them evaluate the world more intelligently.

This chapter will explore students' personal ideas about communism, and it will address several historical definitions of communism, the nature of the Soviet system in the figure of Joseph Stalin, and the Soviet system today.

***Meeting of a Committee of Poor Peasants*, 1920, oil on canvas. USSR Museum of the Revolution, Moscow.**

GENERALIZATIONS FOR THE TEACHER

■ Communism is an idealist philosophy, a political philosophy, and an actual historical form of government and social organization.

■ The assessment of communism in the United States is usually tied to our antagonistic relationship with the Soviet Union. As a result, we tend to regard communism as an unchanging position, rather than something historical and changeable.

■ Societies often experience disparities and tensions between their stated goals and their actual practices. To understand a society, it is important to examine both its ideals and its practical realities, and to compare these two.

■ Communism, rather than being automatically feared, or summarily dismissed, should be analyzed rationally.

2 / ACTIVITY ONE

PERSONAL IDEAS ABOUT COMMUNISM

OBJECTIVES:
This chapter begins with an analysis of the various opinions and stereotypes students may hold about the Soviet Union. That is, the teacher should start with what students already know, rather than assume that students have no opinions. In addition, teachers should be willing to explore their own assumptions about communism with students. Such discussions will provide a groundwork upon which to build the rest of this chapter and curriculum. Students will certainly benefit from articulating their opinions, fears, and feelings about communism; in addition, the exercise will provide a good opportunity to explore the nature of both good and bad stereotypes. (This view of stereotypes was explained in detail in Chapter 1, Activity #1, "What We Can Learn from Political Cartoons.")

MATERIALS NEEDED: None.

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes).

PROCEDURE:
■ Have students write down what comes to mind when they think about the word "communism." Have them share what they have written, and list these ideas on the board. Compare and contrast these ideas and beliefs.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
■ Does everyone seem to have a similar concept of the word "communism"? Are there any large disagreements with the responses offered by the class? Try to group these responses into a few viewpoints that might offer different ways to think about communism.

■ Ask students where they have learned about their concepts of communism. Help them identify sources for their specific views, if possible: television, film, books, class, teachers, news, political figures, and so forth.

■ Ask students if they have any questions about communism. What are they confused about? What do they want to understand?

2/ ACTIVITY TWO

COMMUNISM AS AN IDEA: DEFINITIONS

OBJECTIVES:
This activity offers three different explanations of the communist system. Students are asked first to analyze a definition of communism taken from the Encyclopedia Britannica. Teachers may want to use only this reading in this activity. However, two more difficult readings are provided. Students might also read the accompanying excerpt from *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, a very well-known statement of the political philosophy of communism. They might also read the accompanying excerpt from "National Security Document No. 68 (NSC 68)," one of the most important foreign policy documents ever produced by the United States government. Taken together, these readings will establish many of the main ideas and conflicts that will be explored in subsequent activities in this curriculum. Brief introductions for the readings can be found below.

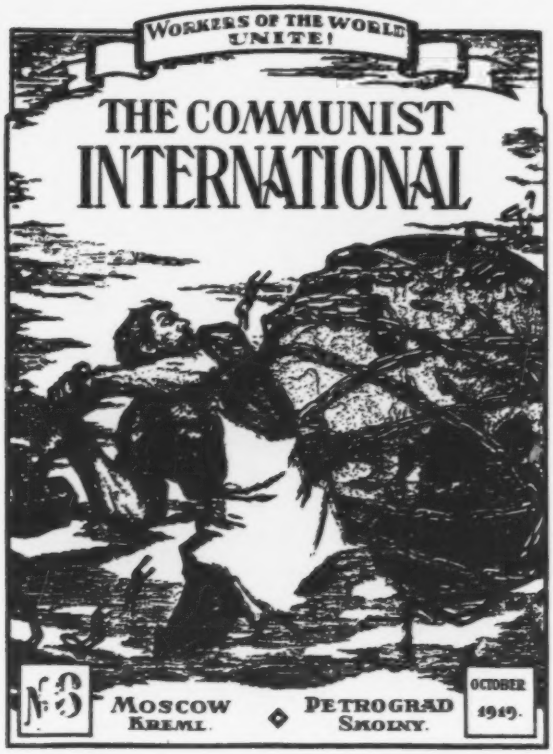
MATERIALS REQUIRED: Readings (included).

TIME REQUIRED: One class period (20 minutes) for discussion of Reading #1, one class period (45 minutes) for discussion of each of the remaining readings, if the readings are assigned as homework.

PROCEDURE:
Have the class study and discuss the following readings.

READING 1: "Communism," *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Vol.3, 15th edition, 1988), pp.496-7.
This reading offers a short explanation of the philosophical and political bases of communism, emphasizing the role of *The Communist Manifesto*. It will provide a reference point for the two readings that follow.

READING 2: Excerpt from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: Penguin, 1987—originally published in 1848).
As a detailed introduction to *The Communist Manifesto*, the teacher can share with students the following information, taken from the "Communism" entry in C.D. Kernig, ed., *Marxism, Communism, and Western Society*, Vol. 2 (New York: Herder & Herder, 1972), pp.70-89.



Newspaper of the Communist International, 1919.

The term "communism" is generally applied to those conceptions of a future society in which private property is abolished, the means of production become publicly owned, and distribution and consumption are regulated on the basis of a communal way of life and the joint possession of goods. In such a society the material and cultural needs of mankind would in theory be satisfied equitably and all forms of political domination and repression would disappear. . . . Communism as a concept is also closely associated with socialism. . . . By their nature both doctrines are products of the modern industrial age, although there exists a tradition of communist and utopian idealism derived on the one hand from Plato's Republic *and on the other from early Christianity. . . .*

The early communists saw communism as the realization of social justice or Christian brotherly love through the artificial creation of a social system free from oppression. Most of them believed that this new society could be established without any period of transition, either through revolution or through education or through the spread of exemplary communes. . . .

Communism became a revolutionary force in the emergent mass movement of the 19th-century working class. . . . Adoption around 1840 of the word "communism" by French revolutionary secret societies and by emigre associations within the embryonic German labour movement was of fundamental importance for the development of the concept. . . .

Karl Marx had become an avowed communist by the spring of 1844, after having initially dismissed communism as a dogmatic abstraction. . . . He saw the road to communism as an extension of Hegel and Feuerbach, and communism itself as the complete elimination of man's alienation . . . and hence as the prerequisite for a new and truly human phase in history. Since he regarded economic alienation, in the form of private property, as the root cause of all other forms of alienation, Marx's demand for the abolition of private property constituted the link between his own theories and those of his predecessors. . . .

[After the Soviet Revolution, and in response to many reform movements within Marxism] It was Lenin who was responsible for bringing communist visions of the future to the fore once more in the Marxist world. . . . In April 1917 he proposed definitively that the party [he led] should be known as the Communist Party and thus demonstrate that—unlike the various social-democratic parties [of the time]—it was firmly founded on [Marx's] Manifesto of the Communist Party.

The following excerpt from *The Manifesto* offers Marx's views, in brief, on history and the class struggle, on the abolition of private property, on wage labor, and on the family, education, and nationalism.

READING 3: Excerpt from "NSC 68," a report by the National Security Council of the United States, 14 April 1950.

This report, written just before hostilities erupted in Korea, delineates suggestions to President Harry Truman regarding American policy toward the Soviet Union. In the words of the report, these suggestions were offered in response to the President's request for "a reexamination of our objectives in peace and war and of the effect of these objectives on our strategic plans, in

the light of the probable fission bomb capability and possible thermonuclear bomb capability of the Soviet Union." This reading offers a view of communism penned 100 years after *The Communist Manifesto*; the time between, of course, is marked by the development of the Soviet Union. Students are thus offered two dramatically different views of communism. The stark contrast between these two views is intended to provoke discussion. However, the teacher should not rest with the simple dichotomies these readings imply (democracy/communism, Marxist idealism/Soviet reality). The complexities of these dichotomies should be explored throughout this curriculum.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Reading 1

■ This reading describes two different forms of communism: one being a utopian philosophy (described in first half of the reading) and the other being the ruling philosophy of the Soviet Union (described in the second half). Define these two forms and discuss the relationship between the two.

■ Discuss the role that class conflict is said to play in the development of communism. Do students have any experiences that they feel reveal class relations? Can students find in their own experience a basis for Marx's analysis, or a refutation of this analysis?

Reading 2

■ Discuss Marx and Engels' definitions of private property and wage labor. What do Marx and Engles wish to change? What changes do they wish to introduce?

■ Discuss the role that the following institutions are said to play: the family, education, the nation.

■ In Marx and Engels' view, what does it mean to be free?

Reading 3

■ How is communism described in this document? What are the goals of the Soviet Union said to be?

■ How is the United States described in this document? According to the NSC, what must the United States government protect?

■ According to NSC 68, what does it mean to be free?

READING ONE:

"COMMUNISM"

ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA, VOL. 3, 15TH ED. (1988).

Communism, a political system or social organization based on common property or upon the equal distribution of wealth. The term is also applied to political programs and movements, inspired by Marxist-Leninist principles, which seek to bring about such types of social organization. . . .

The origins of the idea of Communism lie deep in Western thought. The idea of a classless society, in which all the means of production and distribution are owned by the community as a whole and from which any traces of a state have disappeared, has long held a fascination for human beings. Many of the utopias described in literature, including Thomas More's *Utopia* and Johann Andreae's *Christianopolis*, provide for the common ownership of property to some extent. In the 19th century several utopian, classless communities—short-lived, for the most part—were founded in the United States.

Communism acquired a new meaning in 1848 with the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. There were major differences between Communism as practiced by the so-called utopian socialists and Communism as described by Marx and Engels. The first difference was that according to Marx and Engels, Communism need not occur only in isolated communities but could occur all over the globe at the same time. Another Marx-Engels principle was that the establishment of Communism did not have to await enlightened leaders but was rather the inevitable outcome of a historical process.

According to the *Manifesto*, all of human history has been a long, protracted struggle between an exploiting class, the capitalists in the present age, and an exploited class, the workers, or proletariat.

This historical struggle enters its critical stage with the dominance of capitalism. The effect of capitalism is to greatly strengthen the working class, for it brings about the interdependence of economic systems all over the world, causing the working classes everywhere to realize their common interests. It also sweeps away illusions about man and society, forcing the working class to realize its oppression at the hands of the capitalists. At the same time, the capitalist class is weakening, owing to fierce competition and the drying up of markets. There is little doubt that Marx and Engels, when writing the *Manifesto*, felt that they were about to witness a worldwide revolution through which the working class would be able to reappropriate the means of production, distribution, and exchange.

The failure of the revolutions of 1848, however, as well as the reluctance of the working classes to wholeheartedly become involved in the historical process predicted by Marx, caused Marx and later political philosophers to reappraise their views. In the *Critique of the Gotha Program* (1875), Marx wrote that the revolution will not immediately bring about the ideal, classless, Communist state. "Prolonged birth pangs" will accompany its emergence from capitalist society, and a period of adaptation, the "dictatorship of the proletariat," will be necessary. Although in this work Marx refers to this interlude as the first phase of Communist society, in other writings he usually refers to it as Socialism, reserving the word Communism for the authentically propertyless, classless, and stateless higher phase for which Socialism is preparing. Communism is, strictly speaking, the stage of final transcendence of class division and the elimination of a coercive State. This is the reason that "Communism" is missing

from the name U.S.S.R.; it is the Union of Soviet *Socialist* Republics.

Early on, however, this precise distinction began to be confused. In 1847 Marx himself had founded a party he called Communist—to distinguish it, he said, from certain already existing parties which called themselves Socialist, but which in Marx's eyes were not worthy of the term. "Communist" began to be used to apply to a specific party with a specific program, rather than its final goal. [i.e., the creation of a communist party]

The individual who did most to unify this party and forge this program was the Russian Marxist ideologue Lenin. Lenin felt that the working class was unable to bring about the revolution on its own but needed a professional group of revolutionaries to guide it in its goals. Lenin was particularly opposed to Social Democratic parties, which he felt had abandoned radical goals for a complacent expectation of evolutionary Socialist or liberal gains. The word Communist would be used to apply to any party or program with a revolutionary program whose ultimate goal was to bring about Communism. In this sense, Communism has been referred to as "impatient Marxism." Lenin and the Bolsheviks came to power in Russia in 1917.

For a while, Communist parties continued to look upon themselves as facets of a world-wide movement. But it was inevitable that the attainment of Socialism in the Soviet Union (Russia) would cause conflicts with the world-wide movement. Soon the Soviet national interest began to dominate the Comintern [the international organization of communist parties], and Communist parties in other countries became satellites of the Soviet one. But the Soviet domination of these Communist nations shortly encountered resistance. The most momentous event in postwar Communism was the defection of Yugoslavia under Josip Broz Tito, who argued that there were "different roads to Socialism," since local conditions must be taken into account when a nation maps a Communist strategy. This was followed by the break between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China in the early 1960's. The U.S.S.R. has continued to treat Communist parties in other nations as appendages where it can, crushing resistance in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Afghanistan in 1979.

Lenin as he appeared in *October* (1929), Sergei Eisenstein's film portraying the Soviet Revolution.

READING TWO:

THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS
EXCERPT; ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN 1848 (NEW YORK: PENGUIN, 1987).

The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer.

They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes. . . .

. . . [T]he theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.

We Communists have been reproached with the desire of abolishing the right of personally acquiring property as the fruit of a man's own labour, which property is alleged to be the ground work of all personal freedom, activity and independence.

Hard-won, self-acquired, self-earned property! Do you mean the property of the petty artisan and of the small peasant, a form of property that preceded the bourgeois form? There is no need to abolish that; the development of industry has to a great

Karl Marx

extent already destroyed it, and is still destroying it daily.

Or do you mean modern bourgeois private property?

But does wage labour create any property for the labourer? Not a bit. It creates capital, i.e., that kind of property which exploits wage labour, and which cannot increase except upon condition of begetting a new supply of wage labour for fresh exploitation. Property, in its present form, is based on the antagonism of capital and wage labour. Let us examine both sides of this antagonism.

To be a capitalist is to have not only a purely personal but a social *status* in production. Capital is a collective product, and only by the united action of many members, nay, in the last resort, only by the united action of all members of society, can it be set in motion.

Capital is, therefore, not a personal, it is a social power.

When, therefore, capital is converted into common property, into the property of all members of society, personal property is not thereby transformed into social property. It is only the social character of the property that is changed. It loses its class character.

Let us now take wage labour.

The average price of wage labour is the minimum wage, i.e., that quantum of the means of subsistence which is absolutely requisite to keep the labourer in bare existence as a labourer. What, therefore, the wage-labourer appropriates by means of his labour, merely suffices to prolong and reproduce a bare existence. We by no means intend to abolish this personal appropriation of the products of labour, an appropriation that is made for the maintenance and reproduction of human life, and that leaves no surplus wherewith to command the labour of others. All that we want to do away with is the miserable character of this appropriation, under which the labourer lives merely to increase capital, and is allowed to live only in so far as the interest of the ruling class requires it.

In bourgeois society, living labour is but a means to increase accumulated labour. In Communist society, accumulated labour is but a means to widen, to enrich, to promote the existence of the labourer. . . .

You are horrified at our intending to do away with private property. But in your existing society, private property is already done away with for nine-tenths of the population; its existence for the few is solely due to its non-existence in the hands of those nine-tenths. You reproach us, therefore, with intending to do away with a form of property the necessary condition for whose existence is the non-existence of any property for the immense majority of society.

Poster depicting Marx, Engels, and Lenin. "The future is with communism."

In one word, you reproach us with intending to do away with your property. Precisely so; that is just what we intend.

From the moment when labour can no longer be converted into capital, money, or rent, into a social power capable of being monopolized, i.e., from the moment when individual property can no longer be transformed into bourgeois property, into capital, from that moment, you say, individuality vanishes.

You must, therefore, confess that by "individual" you mean no other person than the bourgeois, than the middle-class owner of property. This person must, indeed, be swept out of the way, and made impossible.

Communism deprives no man of the power to appropriate the products of society; all that it does is to deprive him of the power to subjugate the labour of others by means of such appropriation.

It has been objected that upon the abolition of private property all work will cease, and universal laziness will overtake us.

According to this, bourgeois society ought long ago to have gone to the dogs through sheer idleness; for those of its members who work, acquire nothing, and those who acquire anything, do not work. The whole of this objection is but another expression of the tautology: that there can no longer be any wage labour when there is no longer any capital....

Soviet stamp, 1921. "The Liberated Proletariat."

...[D]on't wrangle with us so long as you apply, to our intended abolition of bourgeois property, the standard of your bourgeois notions of freedom, culture, law, etc. Your very ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property, just as your jurisprudence is but the will of your class made into a law for all, a will, whose essential character and direction are determined by the economical conditions of existence of your class.

The selfish misconception that induces you to transform into eternal laws of nature and of reason, the social forms springing from your present mode of production and form of property—historical relations that rise and disappear in the progress of production—this misconception you share with every ruling class that has preceded you....

Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists.

On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians....

The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital.

Do you charge us with wanting to stop the exploitation of children by their parents? To this crime we plead guilty.

But, you will say, we destroy the most hallowed of relations, when we replace home education by social.

And your education! Is not that also social, and determined by the social conditions under which you educate, by the intervention, direct or indirect, of society, by means of schools, etc.? The Communists have not invented the intervention of society in education; they do but seek to alter the character of intervention, and to rescue education from the influence of the ruling class.

The bourgeois clap-trap about the family and education, about the hallowed correlation of parent and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more, by the action of Modern Industry, all family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder, and their children transformed into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labour....

The Communists are further reproached with desiring to abolish countries and nationality.

The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got. Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself *the* nation, it is, so far, itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word.

National differences and antagonisms between peoples are daily more and more vanishing, owing to the development of the bourgeoisie, to freedom of commerce, to the world market, to uniformity in the mode of production and in the conditions of life corresponding thereto.

The supremacy of the proletariat will cause them to vanish still faster. United action, of the leading civilized countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat.

In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another is put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end. . . .

. . . [M]easures [for achieving this] will of course be different in different countries.

Nevertheless, in the most advanced countries, the following will be pretty generally applicable:

- Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.
- A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.
- Abolition of all right of inheritance.
- Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.
- Centralization of credit in the hands of the State, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly.
- Centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the state.
- Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State; the bringing into cultivation of wastelands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.
- Equal liability of all to labour. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.
- Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country, by a more equable distribution of the population over the country.
- Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children's factory labour in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, etc., etc.

When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. Political power, properly so called, is merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organize itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.

In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.

READING THREE:

EXCERPT; "NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL DOCUMENT NO. 68 (NSC 68)." U.S. GOVERNMENT, 14 APRIL 1950.

Two complex sets of factors have . . . altered [the] historical distribution of power. First, the defeat of Germany and Japan and the decline of the British and French Empires have interacted with the development of the United States and the Soviet Union in such a way that power has increasingly gravitated to these two centers. Second, the Soviet Union, unlike previous aspirants to hegemony, is animated by a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own, and seeks to impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world. Conflict has, therefore, become endemic and is waged, on the part of the Soviet Union, by violent or non-violent methods in accordance with the dictates of expediency. With the development of increasingly terrifying weapons of mass destruction, every individual faces the ever-present possibility of annihilation should the conflict enter the phase of total war.

On the one hand, the people of the world yearn for relief from the anxiety arising from the risk of atomic-war. On the other hand, any substantial further extension of the area under the domination of the Kremlin would raise the possibility that no coalition adequate to confront the Kremlin with greater strength could be assembled. It is in this context that this Republic and its citizens in the ascendancy of their strength stand in their deepest peril.

The issues that face us are momentous, involving the fulfillment or destruction not only of this Republic but of civilization itself. They are issues which will not await our deliberations. With conscience and resolution this Government and the people it represents must now take new and fateful decisions.

Fundamental Purpose of the United States

The fundamental purpose of the United States is laid down in the Preamble to the Constitution: ". . . to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity." In essence, the fundamental purpose is to assure the integrity and vitality of our free society, which is founded upon the dignity and worth of the individual.

Three realities emerge as a consequence of this purpose: Our determination to maintain the essential elements of individual freedom, as set forth in the Constitution and Bill of Rights; our determination to create conditions under which our free and democratic system can live and prosper; and our determination to fight if necessary to defend our way of life, for which as in the Declaration of Independence, "with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor."

Fundamental Design of the Kremlin

The fundamental design of those who control the Soviet Union and the international communist movement is to retain and solidify their absolute power, first in the Soviet Union and second in the areas now under their control. In the minds of the Soviet leaders, however, achievement of this design requires the dynamic extension of their authority and the ultimate elimination of any effective opposition to their

authority.

The design, therefore, calls for the complete subversion or forcible destruction of the machinery of government and structure of society in the countries of the non-Soviet world and their replacement by an apparatus and structure subservient to and controlled from the Kremlin. To that end Soviet efforts are now directed toward the domination of the Eurasian land mass. The United States, as the principal center of power in the non-Soviet world and the bulwark of opposition to Soviet expansion, is the principal enemy whose integrity and vitality must be subverted or destroyed by one means or another if the Kremlin is to achieve its fundamental design. . . .

Soviet Intentions and Capabilities

Political and Psychological

The Kremlin's design for world domination begins at home. The first concern of a despotic oligarchy is that the local base of its power and authority be secure. The massive fact of the iron curtain isolating the Soviet peoples from the outside world, the repeated political purges within the USSR and the institutionalized crimes of the MVD [internal police, later named KGB] are evidence that the Kremlin does not feel secure at home and that "the entire coercive force of the socialist state" is more than ever one of seeking to impose its absolute authority over "the economy, manner of life, and consciousness of people," (Vyshinski, "The Law of the Soviet State," p. 74). Similar evidence in the satellite states of Eastern Europe leads to the conclusion that this same policy, in less advanced phases, is being applied to the Kremlin's colonial areas.

Being a totalitarian dictatorship, the Kremlin's objectives in these policies is the total subjective submission of the peoples now under its control. The concentration camp is the prototype of the society which these policies are designed to achieve, a society in which the personality of the individual is so broken and perverted that he participates affirmatively in his own degradation.

The Kremlin's policy toward areas not under its control is the elimination of resistance to its will and the extension of its influence and control. It is driven to follow this policy because it cannot . . . tolerate the existence of free societies; to the Kremlin the most mild and inoffensive free society is an affront, a challenge and a subversive influence. . . .

The means employed by the Kremlin in pursuit of this policy are limited only by considerations of expediency. Doctrine is not a limiting factor; rather it dictates the employment of violence, subversion and deceit, and rejects moral considerations. In any event, the Kremlin's conviction of its own infallibility has made its devotion to theory so subjective that past or present pronouncements as to doctrine offer no reliable guide to future actions. The only apparent restraints on resort to war are, therefore, calculations of practicality.

With particular reference to the United States, the Kremlin's strategic and tactical policy is affected by its estimate that we are not only the greatest immediate obstacle which stands between it and world domination, we are also the only power which could release forces in the free and Soviet worlds which could destroy it. The Kremlin's policy toward us is consequently animated by a peculiarly virulent blend of hatred and fear. Its strategy has been one of attempting to undermine the complex of forces, in this country and in the rest of the free world, on which our power is based. In this it has both adhered to doctrine and followed the sound principle of seeking maximum results with minimum risks and commitments. The present application of this strategy is a new form of expression for traditional Russian caution. However, there is no justification in Soviet theory or practice for predicting that, should the Kremlin become convinced that it could cause our downfall by one conclusive blow, it would not seek that solution.

In considering the capabilities of the Soviet world, it is of prime importance to remember that, in contrast to ours, they are being drawn upon close to the maximum

possible extent. Also in contrast to us, the Soviet world can do more with less—it has a lower standard of living, its economy requires less to keep it functioning and its military machine operates effectively with less elaborate equipment and organization.

The capabilities of the Soviet world are being exploited to the full because the Kremlin is inescapably militant. It is inescapably militant because it possesses and is possessed by a world-wide revolutionary movement, because it is the inheritor of Russian imperialism and because it is a totalitarian dictatorship. Persistent crisis, conflict and expansion are the essence of the Kremlin's militancy. This dynamism serves to intensify all Soviet capabilities. . . .

Finally, there is a category of capabilities, strictly speaking neither institutional nor ideological, which should be taken into consideration. The extraordinary flexibility of Soviet tactics is certainly a strength. It derives from the utterly amoral and opportunistic conduct of Soviet policy. Combining this quality with the elements of secrecy, the Kremlin possesses a formidable capacity to act with the widest tactical latitude, with stealth and with speed.

The greatest vulnerability of the Kremlin lies in the basic nature of its relations with the Soviet people.

That relationship is characterized by universal suspicion, fear and denunciation. It is a relationship in which the Kremlin relies, not only for its power but its very survival, on intricately devised mechanisms of coercion. The Soviet monolith is held together by the iron curtain around it and the iron bars within it, not by any force of natural cohesion. These artificial mechanisms of unity have never been intelligently challenged by a strong outside force. The full measure of their vulnerability is therefore not yet evident. . . .

In short, Soviet ideas and practices run counter to the best and potentially the strongest instincts of men, and deny their most fundamental aspirations. Against an adversary which effectively affirmed the constructive and hopeful instincts of men and was capable of fulfilling their fundamental aspirations, the Soviet system might prove to be fatally weak.

STALIN

OBJECTIVES:

American visitors to the Soviet Union often are surprised when they do not find machine guns and police on every block, and frightened people in every room. One recent surprised visitor was Ted Turner, the multi-millionaire who owns the television stations CNN and WTBS. Turner was amazed to see that "there weren't KGB agents on every corner." In fact, he added, he "walked the streets of Moscow and saw mothers with their little children."[1] Turner's reaction is not unusual. Often a visitor to the Soviet Union is surprised to hear Soviet citizens complain openly about Soviet life. If the visitor can read Russian, he or she may be shocked to read the debates over government policy that appear daily in the newspapers. Visitors sometimes quickly learn that our picture of life in the Soviet Union is quite outdated.

The Soviet Union has not always been like this. Many of our images of the Soviet Union reflect the realities of Soviet life under Joseph Stalin's rule. Indeed, document NSC 68 (see previous activity) might be considered to be a description of life under Stalin. Although the USSR is no longer the place it was under Stalin, the perceptions of the Soviet Union created by his dictatorial command exist still. For many Americans, Stalin represents the real nature of the Soviet system, a nature to which it may always return in spite of any current appearances. Others, while recognizing Stalin's abuses, do not feel that they bespeak any inevitabilities about the USSR. Although students will not be able to come to any conclusions about this debate based solely upon this activity, a discussion of this topic is necessary to understand not only the Soviet system, but American fears about the Soviet system. This activity, however, should be seen alongside subsequent activities in this curriculum about human rights and reforms in the Soviet Union.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included).

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes), if reading is assigned as homework.

PROCEDURE:

■ Read and discuss the following article, written by the authors, on Stalin's rule.

Althought the USSR is no longer the place it was under Stalin, the perceptions of the Soviet Unión created by his dictatorial command exist still.

2 / ACTIVITY THREE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ Have you heard of Stalin before? If so, where did you hear about him? What did you hear?

■ Teachers may have students research articles from October 1988 to the present that describe Soviet views of Stalin. Under Gorbachev's reforms, accepted viewpoints of Stalin have been under question in the Soviet Union. What changes can the students detect in Soviet opinion?

■ Teachers might discuss with students injustices that have figured significantly in the histories of other countries. For instance, the class might discuss the institution of slavery in 18th and 19th century America, and in South Africa today, or the crimes of the Nazis during World War II. Some countries have been able to correct abuses and put such terrible violations of human rights behind them. It may be that the Soviet Union has done the same with Stalinism, but we have difficulty knowing for certain.

The teacher should not glibly equate Stalinism, racial slavery, or Nazism. But students should understand that evils can arise in every culture, and past evils are inevitably a part of a nation's identity. What might a country do to make certain that abuses such as these cannot happen? When, and under what conditions, can a country forgive itself, and forgive others?

READING:
STALIN'S RULE

Lenin, the leader of the Communist Party and of the Bolshevik Revolution, died in 1924. Within three years, Stalin had assumed command of the Soviet Union. Between 1927 and his death in 1953, Stalin ruled as the dictator of the USSR, subordinating the Communist Party to carry out his policies. Stalin decided that the survival of the still-backward USSR depended upon rapid industrialization and rapid collectivization of agriculture. To achieve these ends, he developed a highly centralized economy, attempting to govern all aspects of Soviet life through officials in Moscow. Even the most minute decisions of the Soviet government came under his scrutiny; during World War II, for example, Stalin himself chose the materials used to build Soviet aircraft. Stalin even wrote the news that would be read to the Soviet population over the radio.[1] Stalin enforced his power by transforming the Soviet Union into a police state. Most of the original Bolsheviks of the Revolution were executed, and millions of Soviet citizens were deported, sent to prison camps, or killed. Members of the Politburo lived in constant fear of his wrath, and the general population experienced what can only be described as mass terror. It was hard to imagine that one man could be so powerful in such a large country. Yet many Soviets did not recognize the full extent of Stalin's power. It is reported that when Boris Pasternak, the famous Russian author of *Doctor Zhivago*, heard about the murder of hundreds of thousands in the great purges, he said, "Someone must tell Stalin so this will be stopped." Stalin, of course, masterminded these purges. Diplomats from other countries, including the United States, often were fooled into thinking that Stalin had to answer to other leaders within the Party.

Stalin also greatly affected intellectual and cultural life in the Soviet Union. His rule was characterized by a cultural rigidity in which censorship was severe. Only approved writings, art, and music were presented to the public. Writers and artists were forced to abandon their individual perspectives and instead create works according to an approach determined by Stalin and his associates. As Professor Seweryn Bialer has written, "the pluralism and creative freedom that existed before Stalin's revolutions from above were replaced by uniformity and conformity in the arts and social sciences. The tastes and predilections of the leader and his entourage became not only the measure of artistic achievement, but they prescribed the very scale of artistic expression."[2] This approach was designed to promote certain images Stalin had of the future of Soviet society and, of course, artists and intellectuals were required to portray Stalin in a positive light in whatever they did. This led to what has been called a "cult of personality." Stalin was pictured as all-important, almost god-like.

Stalin's rule made life more difficult for average workers. Their wages were kept low while the elite in the Communist Party took money and privileges for themselves. Rather than increasing equality in accord with the goals of communism, Stalin increased inequalities. Yet the changes pale before the violence Stalin committed. Stalin was a mass murderer. Through thousands of underlings, he arrested between seven and nine million Soviet citizens, and he murdered perhaps hundreds of thousands—more than a million, by some estimates. (Experts still differ widely on the extent of Stalin's purges.[3])

Terror was waged most directly against the elite of the Communist Party. By 1938, over half of the delegates to the 1934 17th Communist Party Congress had been arrested. Over 70 percent of the full and can-

Writers and artists were forced to abandon their individual perspectives and instead create works according to an approach determined by Stalin and his associates.

didate members elected in 1934 to the Party Central Committee were arrested and later shot. In the armed forces, more than 33 percent of all the officers were executed, imprisoned or fired, with the percentage of victims being much higher among top ranking officers.[4] It is hard to imagine what this was like. Picture the president of the United States ordering the police to arrest and execute most of the Congress and Senate, the Supreme Court, the military leadership at the Pentagon, and anyone else in a position of great power in American society. And these purges were only part of the terror Stalin waged against Soviet society. Millions of additional deaths resulted from the collectivization of agriculture, when individually-held farms were taken from peasants and converted into large farms run by the state.

Picture the president of the United States ordering the police to arrest and execute most of the Congress and Senate, the Supreme Court, the military leadership . . .

It is natural to ask, "Why did Stalin want so many people murdered and imprisoned?" Unfortunately, scholars here and in the Soviet Union have been unable to answer this question convincingly. It has been said that Stalin was insane. Some say he tried to eliminate old-fashioned officials to clear the way in government for younger men. Others say that he got rid of challengers to better consolidate his own power. None of these explanations are wholly satisfactory, and it must be pointed out that thousands of Soviets supported and profited from Stalin's policies. But even if we cannot adequately explain Stalin's actions, we must recognize the effect Stalin's rule had upon the Soviet Union, and upon our understanding of this country. We cannot understand fully the horror that millions of individuals and families felt as they were assaulted by Stalin's government, but we must see how important this time is for a complete understanding of the Soviet Union.

What can Stalin's rule tell us about the Soviet Union today? Some people think we should always keep Stalin in mind because he represents the true nature of the Soviet system. Other people think it is important to keep Stalin in mind, not because the Soviet Union today is as it was during Stalin's rule, but because the Soviet system has the potential for returning to Stalinist rule. These people would argue that although the Soviet system functions without terror today, given bad conditions or leadership, the system could reinstate massive terror and oppression.

Today, however, it seems reasonable to ask that we not let Stalin's deeds overshadow our understanding of current Soviet society. Certain features of the Soviet bureaucratic system of that time remain in place, in particular, the method of running the economy has its roots in Stalin's era. But we should also recognize that it is precisely these Stalinist methods that Gorbachev is trying to abolish. In fact, a central issue of *glasnost* and *perestroika* is the recognition of the evil of Stalin's ways, and the recognition of the need to remake Soviet society in a very different manner. While it is not yet certain whether Gorbachev will succeed, it seems that today's leaders have rejected the terror that Stalin employed.

SOVIET CITIZENS QUESTION A SOVIET POLICY

OBJECTIVES:
The next activity is built around an article published in the Soviet newspaper *Izvestia*. *Izvestia* is a government newspaper in which citizens often raise questions about government policies, religion, the arts, and literature. The article is a response to a letter sent to the paper's editor asking if pupils are forbidden to wear earrings to school. The article offers an everyday example of the issues that arise when a society tries to put its ideas and values into practice.

There are several ways to consider debates such as the one represented in this reading. Teachers can point out that there is an awareness in the Soviet Union that many values must be questioned and analyzed, and that public forums are provided for the analysis of many aspects of social policy. One can register surprise at these debates, and use them to counter the Western impression of the Soviet Union as a completely closed society. However, the teacher should also take care not to present the following exchange as an example for all policy discussions in the Soviet Union. The discussions in *Izvestia* mostly center upon domestic issues; until very recently, open dissent on issues of ideology and foreign policy has not been allowed. Thus one might read in this letter to the editor the great involvement of the government in the most minute issues, and the people's reliance upon this government intervention. Subsequent activities in this curriculum will discuss ways in which the Soviet government now appears to be recognizing the limits of its power to enforce conformity in a large society. There seems to be a deliberate attempt to introduce more flexibility into Soviet life.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included).

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes).

PROCEDURE:
■ Have students read and discuss the following exchange from *Izvestia*.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
■ What concerns are expressed by the Soviets regarding the wearing of earrings? How do you feel about these concerns?

■ What do you think of the attitudes expressed in the article toward expensive jewelry? Do you think that envy is as serious an issue as the

article suggests? Why or why not?

■ Do you think that dress codes in schools are good ideas? Why do you think schools create dress codes? Recently several school administrators, working with parents, have required elementary students to wear uniforms. In each case, it was said that this was done to reduce the expensive competition between children over clothes, since all families do not have the same means to purchase such clothes. How would you feel if such a policy was instituted at your school?

READING

"FROM OUR MAIL: SHOULD EARRINGS BE WORN TO SCHOOL?"

M. BELAYA

IZVESTIA, 9 NOVEMBER 1983. CONDENSED, REPRINTED IN *THE CURRENT DIGEST OF THE SOVIET PRESS* XXXVI, No.45.

"Dear editors! Please get me the advice of the USSR Ministry of Education and publish it in your newspaper. Are pupils forbidden to wear earrings to school?"—[signed] G. Nidviga, Labinsk, Krasnodar Territory.

We directed this question to K. V. Agafonova, Deputy Director of the USSR Ministry of Education's Chief Administration of Schools.

"There aren't many strict instructions or prohibitions on this matter," replied Kira Vasilyevna.

The Charter for Secondary General-Education Schools and the Rules for Pupils state only that the pupil should be neat and properly dressed. But of course, we do not want the pupil's dress to include articles that can distract either his own attention or the attention of fellow pupils and arouse feelings of envy. That is why we believe that expensive gold jewelry should not be permitted in school. But it is impossible to draw up uniform recommendations for all Union republics, because some of them regard the wearing of earrings from earliest childhood as a kind of national tradition. . . .

We asked the same question of B. G. Naumenko, a geography and German teacher at Moscow School No. 109.

"The teacher is in an ambiguous position in this situation," said Boris Grigoryevich.

One has to set down guidelines: For example, small, inexpensive earrings or an inconspicuous ring can be worn, but expensive, valuable things cannot, although this often creates uncomfortable feelings between teacher and pupil. Moreover, every family has a different conception of what is expensive and what is not. . . .

Everyone we talked to mentioned the fact that we should teach young people good taste and promote a businesslike, austere style in clothing for wear at work and in public institutions and schools. . . .

Moscow schoolgirls. The girl on the left is wearing a school uniform and a Young Pioneer's scarf.

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3

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SOVIET UNION

3
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SOVIET UNION

INTRODUCTION

The organization of our government is familiar to us all—almost everyone who has taken a social studies course knows its basic structure. In the United States there are three branches of government—the legislative, the judicial, and the executive; it is intended that these three branches will "check and balance" one another. Congress—the legislative branch—is divided into two parts: Voters elect members of the House of Representatives from Congressional districts (based on population) within each state, and voters also elect members of the Senate (two senators from each state). Most people also know that the House and the Senate have committees concerned with energy, justice, labor, defense, the budget, and other subjects. The president leads the executive branch and is assisted in his/her work by a cabinet made up of the heads (the secretaries) of various departments—justice, labor, commerce, transportation, defense, state, and so on. The judicial system is composed of a Supreme Court, federal courts, and local courts. We could continue to describe in further detail the various branches, and the information, obviously, would be familiar to a great many American citizens.

Our knowledge of our own system is contrasted by our lack of knowledge of other governments around the world. Many of us have no idea how the governments of Mexico or France or Canada or Thailand are organized. This is the case also with the Soviet Union—few of us could say

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just how the Soviet system is structured, outside of a vague understanding of the Soviet Union as a "dictatorship," a "police state," or a "totalitarian system."

This section will help students achieve a more detailed understanding of the organization of the Soviet system. At the heart of this chapter is the relationship between the people and the government. All societies must establish rules for the organization and functioning of the society. Many times these rules create conflicts between the government and certain individuals. Some societies provide processes for mediating these conflicts; some do not. In this chapter, teachers are provided with several ways to address this problem while still teaching about the Soviet system of government. In Chapter 5, the issue of human rights will be examined in greater detail.

All societies must establish rules for the organization and functioning of the society. Many times these rules create conflicts between the government and certain individuals.

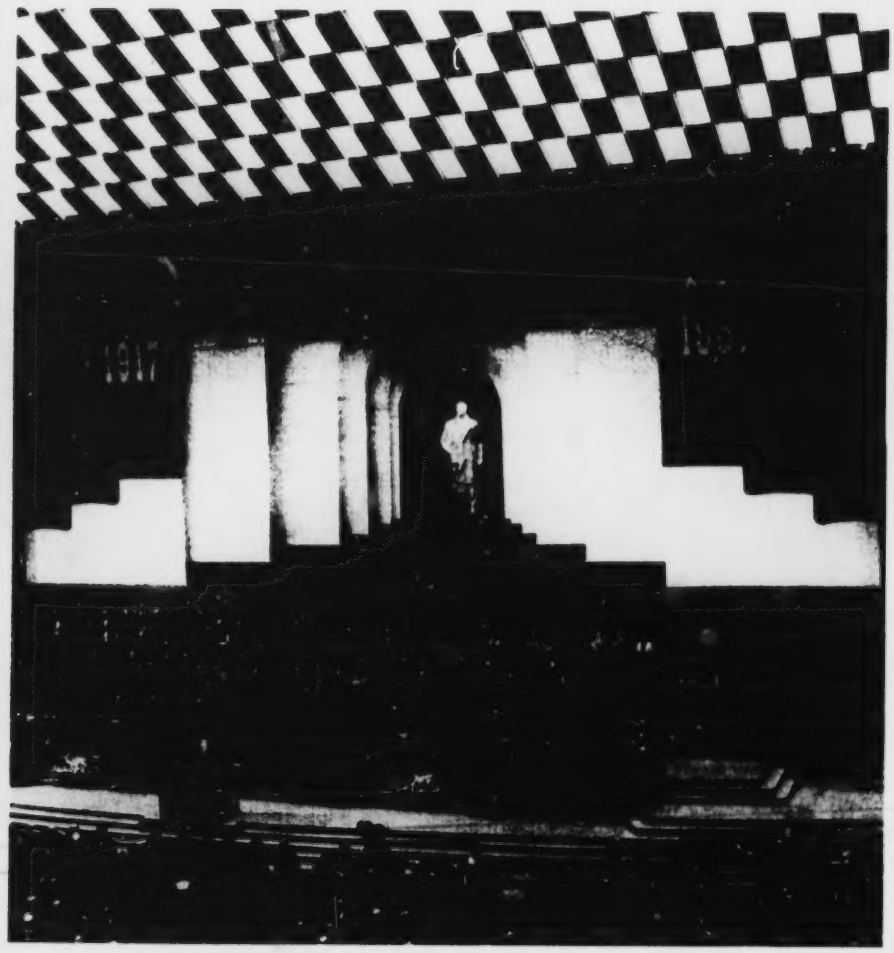
The first activity in this chapter is a general exercise exploring the function of rules in society—students are encouraged to explore the rules that directly affect their own lives; this exploration will establish some of the issues that will be discussed in the chapter's remaining exercises. The second activity delineates the structure of both the Communist Party and the Soviet government. Activity #3 offers a discussion of the *legal* means of protest available to Soviet citizens, and it also raises the question of the degree to which Soviet citizens support their government. The fourth activity describes the conflicts in the Soviet system around the issues of nationality and regional government, and the last activity explores the recent attempts by Mikhail Gorbachev and the Communist Party to reform the Soviet system.

Along with discussing basic information with students, teachers are encouraged to draw attention to what *cannot* be communicated through fact —the sensibility or basic attitudes of a country. Although this is extremely difficult, it is important for students to glimpse the values that inform the Soviet system, and to understand the differences between these values and their own.

GENERALIZATIONS FOR THE TEACHER

- The Soviet government has a more complicated structure than is generally assumed in the United States.
- While the leadership of the Soviet system is powerful and important, it is probably not as powerful as we commonly think. The Soviet government also contains people with differing, conflicting views, and in some ways Soviet citizens are able to express their dissent.
- The Soviet people support their system and are represented by the leadership to a greater degree than is commonly believed in the United States.

- The Soviet people are diverse in nationalities and religions.
- The Soviet system is not eternal and unchanging, and in fact is now undergoing great change.



Meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party to mark the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, 1987.

3/ ACTIVITY ONE

THE PLACE OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN SOCIETY

OBJECTIVES:

Do the Soviet people support their system? This is a difficult question to answer, for as soon as we try, we discover that the Soviet people have different expectations for their system than we have for ours. American citizens within a Soviet system would suffer the loss of many individual liberties we take for granted here in the United States. In fact, individualism is a vital part of our system of beliefs. Just consider the stereotypical American hero: Clint Eastwood, Sylvester Stallone, John Wayne, and James Dean have all played tough individuals who break the rules, who contest authority with fierce independence. And even though this individualism is seen predominantly as a male characteristic, we also have heroines with this independence: Sigourney Weaver, Katherine Hepburn, Sally Field. Such individualism is rare in the USSR. Challenges to authority generally are not celebrated; instead, the Soviets seem first to define themselves as members of a community and a nation. It is thought that the individual will benefit best of all if the community thrives. The Soviets historically have claimed that the pursuit of individual needs leads to selfishness and conflict.

Even in revolution, the Bolsheviks in many ways extended a long tradition of subordination of the individual to the government. Even before the founding of the present Soviet state, the power of the government came first, and force was often used to extend this power. For example, during the reign of Peter the Great (1682-1725), the state police guaranteed adherence to the Tsar's orders. Many, many generations of Soviets have lived with a strong, watchful government.

Subsequent activities in this chapter deal with some of the conflicts between the individual and the state in the Soviet Union. Before students address these conflicts, it would be valuable for students to explore their own feelings about individuality and social expectations. The goal of such an exploration is *not* to draw any facile comparisons between student experience and experience under the Soviet state. It is obvious that no matter what conflicts students might feel over conformity, the United States places great importance on individual rights, even protecting in the courts the rights of the individual *against* the will of the majority. But rules are necessary in all societies. To allow for the proper functioning of society, individualism must—on some level—be regulated. The difficulty for government lies precisely in balancing individual rights with the common good. By exploring their own encounters with rules and regulations, students will achieve a better

understanding of this sometimes difficult relationship between law and the individual, and thus will be better equipped to examine this issue in their study of Soviet society.

MATERIALS NEEDED: None

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:

■ Discuss with students their relationship to various rules and regulations, in school or in society at large. Some questions to initiate this discussion are provided below.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ Recall a time when you asserted your individuality, and broke a rule as a result. What rule did you break, and what were the consequences? How did you feel about breaking this rule?

■ For a school to function smoothly, everyone cannot break all of the rules all of the time. Sometimes students who act independently get into trouble with teachers and administrators; these students are said to disrupt the learning environment, making things worse for everyone. What do you think about this? How can individuality and common purpose be balanced in the school environment? At what point should individual rights be put aside for the good of the group?

■ In schools, rules are made to help balance individual need and the needs of the group. List the major rules in your school. Why do you think these rules were made? How do these rules benefit the common good? How do they benefit or repress the individual? How would you describe a fair school rule? An unfair school rule?

■ The class should choose a specific problem, either in school or in society at large, and discuss at length the measures necessary to correct or control this problem. Are there already rules about this problem? How are they working? If there aren't already rules about this problem, should rules be made? If so, what kind of rules? Are rules the most appropriate means to address this problem? If not, what other means should be used to address this problem? What are the causes of the problem? Does the problem reveal a fault in the individual involved? In the society? In both?

3/ ACTIVITY TWO

THE SOVIET SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

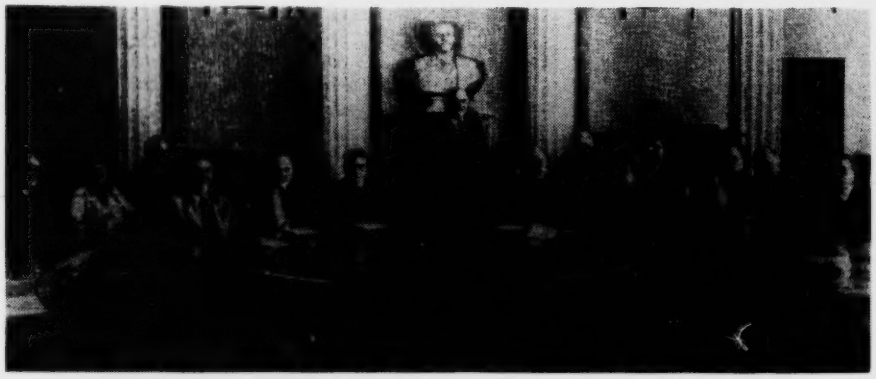
OBJECTIVES:
This activity will give students a basic understanding of the two parts of the Soviet system: the Communist Party and the government. The reading included emphasizes the importance of the Communist Party as the overseer of the government. It also introduces students to reforms now pursued in the Soviet Union that will expand the powers of the government. These reforms are explored in greater depth in a later activity.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Chart and reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:
■ Have students read the following description of the Soviet system. Students may want to do additional, more detailed research on the Soviet system once they have completed this reading.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
■ Students might also research the status of the reforms of the Soviet system initiated in 1988. How are these reforms being implemented? What additional changes have been made? How successful have these reforms been? According to whom? How would success be measured? By actual change created? Some other way?



Justices of the Soviet Supreme Court.

READING:
THE SOVIET SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

The Communist Party

When we consider the government of the Soviet Union, we usually talk about the Communist Party, the center of authority in the USSR. In theory, however, the Communist Party is only half of the Soviet system. The Communist Party is supposed to oversee the work of the other part of the system, which is called the "government" or the "state." The government, in turn, implements the economic and social plans made by the Communist Party. In the words of the Soviet Constitution, the Communist Party is "the leading and guiding force of Soviet society and the nucleus of its political system, of all state organizations and public organizations."

The most powerful part of the Communist Party, and therefore of the entire Soviet system, is the Politburo. The Politburo is composed of the top leaders of the Communist Party; it usually consists of 11 to 15 voting members, and several non-voting members. The General Secretary of the Communist Party, now Mikhail Gorbachev, is the top official of the Politburo, and hence the highest official of the Communist Party, and the most powerful person in the USSR. The Politburo meets in the Kremlin once a week to decide the basic direction Soviet society should take.

Beneath the Politburo is the Central Committee of the Communist Party. This Committee has about 360 members, and these members are elected at the Party Congress that usually occurs once every five years. In theory, the members of the Politburo are elected by the Central Committee, but in practice, the members of the Politburo themselves choose who to remove or add to their ranks, and the Central Committee then votes to approve these choices.

The vital work of the Communist Party is done by the Central Committee Secretariat. The Secretariat provides the basic bureaucracy of the party; the Secretariat includes departments that oversee relations with the U.S., oil production, transportation, agriculture, and so forth. Besides carrying out Party policies, each of these departments compiles the information necessary to help the Party make further policies.

The Soviet Government

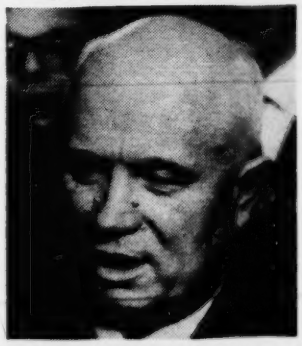
The government is also composed of several levels. There is a federal government in charge of the whole country; below this federal government there are governments in charge of each of the republics that compose the country. Beneath these republican governments are regional governments (similar to our states), and below these regional governments there are local bodies that control districts. In each of these levels of government there are offices for the Communist Party as well as offices for the government.

According to the Soviet Constitution, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR is "the highest body of state authority of the USSR." [Remember that the Communist Party is not considered to be part of the "state."] The Supreme Soviet, and the local soviets which exist at each level of the government—republic, region, city—are made up of representatives elected by the people. Soviet—from the Russian "sovet"—means "council." The soviets (councils) were created originally as vehicles for self-government; this view of them still remains. Yet these soviets have never had much power. The reforms proposed at the June 1988 Party Conference aim to reverse this situation and to give real power to the

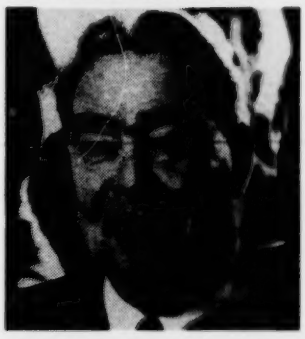
Communist Party heads:

V.I. Lenin, 1917-1924

Joseph Stalin, 1922-1953

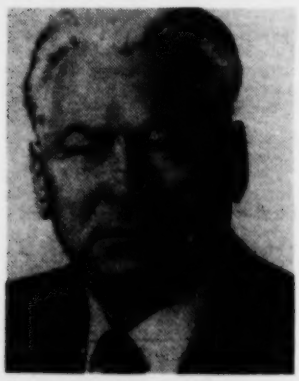


Nikita Khrushchev, 1953-1964



Leonid Brezhnev, 1964-1982

Yuri Andropov, 1982-1984



Konstantin Chernenko, 1984-1985

Mikhail Gorbachev, 1985-

Soviets at all levels. More power is to be given to elected officials, and the influence of other bureaucrats is to be reduced.

The Supreme Soviet consists of two councils: the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities. Each council has approximately 750 members elected by the Supreme Soviets of the various republics. In turn, the members of the republic Supreme Soviets are elected by the people in each district. Thus the soviets are the bodies of the Soviet system that offer the most potential for representative government. As of February 1985, there were 2,304,703 deputies in the various soviets at all levels. Of these, 49.7 percent were men, 50.3 percent were women. 42.7 percent of the deputies were members or candidate members of the Communist Party, while the majority, 57.2 percent, were *not* members of the Communist Party.[1]

The government also contains a great many ministries, one for each major branch of the economy. There is a Ministry of Transportation, a Ministry of Oil Production, a Ministry of Machine Building, and so on. The Council of Ministers is composed of the heads of these ministries. This Council writes plans for the development of the Soviet economy. It suggests current production levels and creates plans for subsequent production (usually drafting five or ten year plans). The recent restructuring (*perestroika*) of the Soviet economy is designed to reduce the role of these ministries in directing the economy.

Because the Council of Ministers involves nearly a hundred ministers, a smaller body is needed to make many decisions. This leadership is provided by the Presidium of the Council of Ministers. The Presidium is composed of around fifteen officials from the most important ministries, although this number varies over time. The Presidium is in fact one of the most powerful groups in the Soviet Union, along with the Politburo, the Secretariat, and the Supreme Soviet Presidium.

At the federal level of government are a few people who make the most important decisions that concern the country. Some experts claim that the greatest federal authority rests in approximately sixty federal positions; others say that power is more widely distributed, and that thousands of people throughout the country participate in important decisions. Given the difficulty we have obtaining detailed information about the Soviet system, the question of which leaders *really* have power in the Soviet Union is still a difficult one.

However, Mikhail Gorbachev has now offered sweeping reforms aimed to increase the power of citizens at the local level and to reduce the role of the Communist Party and the ministries in Moscow. At a special Party conference in 1988, Gorbachev proposed that all elected officials throughout the country (including Gorbachev himself and other top Communist Party leaders elected by the Central Committee) will be limited to two five-year terms in office. Exceptions allowing for a third term will be made if 75% of the voters, through secret ballots, decide to retain a two-term official. In addition Gorbachev called for the creation of a new office of president. The goal of these reforms: to give elected officials real authority to examine and resolve all important questions of government, economic and social life. If these reforms succeed, the government of the Soviet Union will no longer be merely the rubber-stamp of the Communist Party. The parts of the Soviet system will be more equal in power.

1. These statistics found in *Pravda*, 2 March 1985 (reprinted in John L. Schere, ed., *USSR Facts and Figures Annual*, 10 (Academic International Press, 1986).

3 / ACTIVITY THREE

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE

OBJECTIVES:

It is common for Americans to assume that the Soviet people, apart from their government, are just like us. As Richard Pipes, an American commentator on the Soviet Union, has noted, "All people tend to some extent to base their understanding of foreign civilizations on personal experience and self-image and to assume that underneath the cloak of even the most exotic exterior there thinks the same mind and beats the same heart." Pipes claims that misunderstanding is a direct consequence of the liberalism that pervades Western culture. As he says, "The idea of human equality, the noblest achievement of 'bourgeois' culture, is also the source of great political weakness because it denies *a priori* any meaningful distinctions among human beings, whether genetic, ethnic, racial, or other, and therefore blinds those who espouse it to a great deal of human motivation." Further, he claims that "the various theories of 'modernization' that have acquired vogue among American sociologists and political scientists since World War II, once they are stripped of their academic vocabulary, say little more than that when all people of the globe have attained the same level of industrial development as in the United States, they will become like Americans."[1] For Pipes, this is a great misunderstanding that informs many false ideas about the Soviet Union.

Whether or not we agree with Pipes' analysis, it is certain that our opinions about our own way of life confuse our understanding of Soviet experience. We naturally assume that Soviet citizens have the same values that we do, that they cherish freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the right to protest in the same way that we do. We imagine that, like ourselves, no Soviet would consciously tolerate the suspension of the political processes and rights that we Americans regard as natural. When the Soviet government arrests a handful of protesters, or censors an author's writings, or when it harasses members of religious groups, we imagine that this government action is opposed by the majority of the Soviet people. When the government restricts the sale of vodka to crack down on alcoholism, we imagine that this angers the Soviet people. We think that the Soviet government is detached from the people, ruling harshly over them, as a slavemaster rules over slaves.

Certainly, our view of the Soviet government as a harsh master has a basis in the history of Soviet repression both within and without the USSR. But the real relationship between the Soviet people and their government is much more complicated. To some degree, the Soviet government does seek and does obtain the support of the Soviet citizenry. Seweryn Bialer, professor of

Soviet politics, has claimed that, "[A] broad strata of the population exhibit a basic identification with the Soviet system as it is. This identification is to a dominant extent unconscious, amorphous, and unfocused. I am not suggesting, therefore, that it represents a commitment to the system . . . [but it does signify] an acceptable legitimizing base with which the directors of the system have no reason to be dissatisfied." Bialer also describes the "core set of attitudes and beliefs which are strong and persistent" in Soviet society (particularly among the elite), and which the general population, for whatever reasons, support. These attitudes and beliefs are:

It is common for Americans to assume that the Soviet people, apart from their government, are just like us.

- "Opposition to a liberal-democratic political organization of society;
- The commitment to a one-party state and to the leading role of the party within the state;
- A deep-seated fear and mistrust of spontaneity in political and social behavior, which induce an interventionist psychology and stress the need of a strong central government, of organization, of hierarchy, and of order;
- The cult of national unity and the condemnation of individuals and groups who threaten and impair that unity;
- Deep-seated nationalism and a great-power orientation which provides the major effective durable bond among the elites and between the elite and the masses;
- The commitment to a Soviet East European empire;
- The radical decline of the impulse to reshape society and a commitment to the basic structure which Soviet society has attained;
- The withering away of utopianism and a commitment to the rationalization of the system;
- The belief in and commitment to progress understood particularly in a highly material and technical way and combined with a technological and scientific ethos."[2]

Although these attitudes have been challenged to some degree by the recent wave of change and reform in the Soviet Union, we must still understand these beliefs if we are to understand the political sensibility of the Soviet citizenry, and particularly if we are to understand the reactions of this citizenry to change in the Soviet Union. No doubt it is difficult to say exactly *how* the Soviet system is supported by the population, and it is more difficult still to understand the resignation that informs this support. But we must

attempt such an understanding. This activity will assist the teacher in communicating the complex psychological relationship between the Soviet citizen and the Soviet government. Both readings refer to Soviet life in the late 1970s under Leonid Brezhnev. They do not take into account recent changes in the Soviet Union, but the basic notions these readings express are valid, and will further our understanding of Soviet society.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Readings (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 2 classroom periods (45 minutes each)

PROCEDURE:

■ Before assigning these readings, ask students if they believe that the Soviet people support their system. Upon what are these opinions based? Ask students what kind of information they would need to be certain that the Soviet people support (or do not support) their system. If there are former dissidents or other Soviet immigrants who live in your community, invite them to class to discuss their experiences. The subject of dissidents is taken up in greater detail in Chapter 5, "The Individual and Society: Human Rights."

■ Reading 1 is taken from an interview between Roy Medvedev and Piero Ostellino. Medvedev is a well-known Soviet dissident. Although he was thrown out of the Communist Party in 1969, and has worked since under the uncertainty that informs the work of all dissidents, Medvedev is now becoming a more respected voice in the Soviet Union. With the coming of reforms, many of the governing elite are paying more attention to Medvedev's views. In this interview, Medvedev describes in detail the relationship between the Soviet citizen and the state, and he describes the ways that protest manifests itself in the Soviet Union.

■ Reading 2 offers a more general discussion of Soviet belief in the legitimacy of their system. It is taken from a book by Jerry Hough, Professor of Political Science at Duke University, and staff member of the Brookings Institute.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ Both authors claim that the Soviet citizen is not entirely passive—that opportunities exist for expressing opinion and disagreement in the Soviet Union, even though the Soviets do not exercise free speech in the way that we Americans do. According to the authors, how does dissent take place in the Soviet Union?

■ How well did these readings answer your questions? What questions do you still need answered in order to form an opinion?

■ Do most people in your country support your system? How do you know? What things do *you* support about the system in your country? Are there things in your school or society that you do not agree with or support? How do you respond to these? Which do you oppose and take action on, and which do you oppose but don't take action on? How do you decide whether or not to take action? What kinds of action do people usually take in this country? How effective are these actions? How do you show support for a system? How important is this?

■ What kinds of action would a government have to take in order to remain in authority when its people are seriously opposed to it? What factors would allow a social system to continue even if the majority of the people were opposed to it? What kinds of opposition might you see if people were opposed to their government? What are some examples of such opposition today?

Young Pioneers march through Red Square in annual parade.

READING ONE:
ON SOVIET DISSENT

INTERVIEW BETWEEN ROY MEDVEDEV AND PIERO OSTELLINO
EXCERPT; (NEW YORK: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1980).

PO: I'd like to talk about the Soviet man in the street. What legal course does he have for expressing his dissatisfaction and bringing his complaints to the attention of the authorities?

RM: First, we mustn't exaggerate the extent of his disaffection. The overwhelming majority of the population unquestionably sanction the government's power and show no particular wish to have a run-in with the authorities by voicing grievances. But if an individual disagrees vehemently on some issue or other, he doesn't have much choice of means to express himself.

We don't have an independent press or independent publishers. The major Soviet newspapers never run letters from readers who write in about political matters they don't like, not to mention complaints about minor or isolated inconveniences. The USSR has never taken a serious poll of public opinion, particularly on critical political issues, and elections are useless to the dissenter because only one candidate runs on any ticket, whether for the soviets on the local or higher level.

Nevertheless . . . there are ways in which people can make their objections known, but many of them are risky. One of the simplest is to refuse to vote; a man just stays away from the polls. In the most clamorous, of course, he renounces his citizenship and applies for an exit visa. . . .

In Stalin's time, any protest with the faintest hint of political implications meant immediate arrest. That was the rule. But then, the limits of tolerable protest, even with political overtones, relaxed considerably. Yet almost all citizens speak their minds with great caution. They've learned their lesson from experience. . . .

I must say that today the Soviet citizen is allowed more latitude to state his grievances than he is inclined to utilize. . . . Even within today's looser strictures, people are more submissive than they need be. . . .

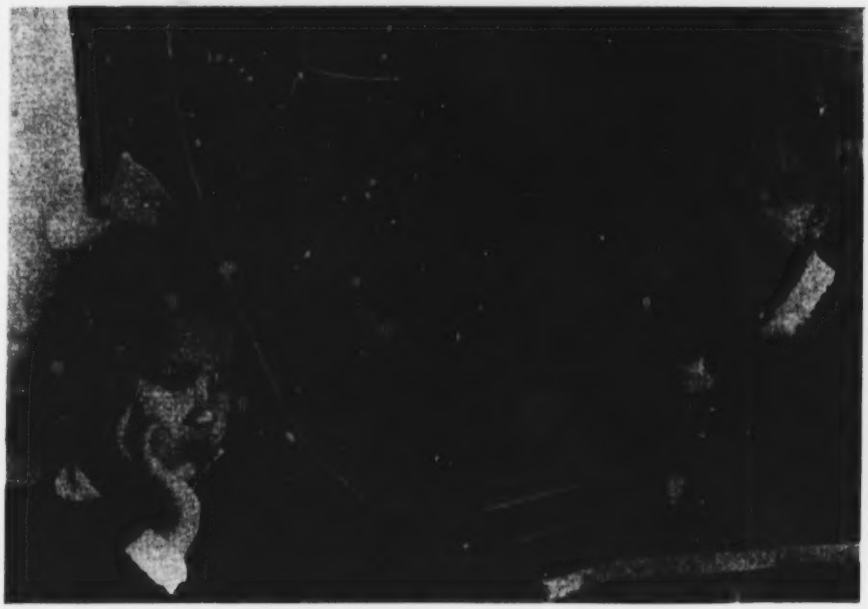
. . . Soviet citizens are only dimly aware of their political and civil rights. The government knows that, therefore it doesn't demand any sincere consensus from them. The men in power are satisfied with nothing more than their silence and passivity, especially in regard to government actions that, by their very nature, couldn't be anything but unpopular. . . .

Also, we have scant assurance of our political and civil rights because we have no efficient mechanism to defend them. When a citizen's rights are violated, he will petition the appeal boards or write letters to the editor or to the Central Committee, but seldom will he get any satisfaction. Most often he doesn't have the right to go to court if he's involved in a dispute with a state organization or a party organ, which has more influence and power. . . .

What I'm saying here applies mainly to political and civil rights. Where economic and social rights are involved, the story is quite different. . . .

The Soviet citizen knows that he is fully entitled to such rights as employment, education, welfare assistance, and free medical care. If he is denied these rights, he'll fight for them with tenacity, sometimes rounding up collective support from his friends and neighbors. Usually he wins. He knows that he has the right to see a doctor any time he

Soviet citizen reading *Pravda*, posted daily on city bulletin boards.



The Soviet citizen knows that he is fully entitled to such rights as employment, education, welfare assistance, and free medical care.

wants or to have the doctor make a house call. He knows that his children have the right to be educated in a free school. These services are all gratis. He's sure of his right to work and he demands that a job be provided.

To dismiss the Soviet citizen as a passive, apolitical human being is entirely erroneous. When he has no doubts about what is due him by law, he will act with forthright courage and energy . . . Once when the traffic on the Prospekt Mira (the Avenue of Peace, in Moscow) was blocked for some reason and crowds of people collected at the bus stops, they suddenly swarmed across that wide boulevard and stopped every vehicle that came along. When the traffic police asked them to clear the way, they demanded that the bus service be resumed immediately so that they could go home. The militia had no choice but to oblige them and, after only a few minutes, dozens of emergency buses arrived on the scene. This incident illustrates what I'm saying: that when Soviet citizens are sure of their rights, they'll often take tough action to make sure they get them.

PO: . . . The Soviet Consitution provides that some rights can be granted only when they strengthen socialism, build Communism, and advance the welfare of the workers. But who decides whether a given right will strengthen socialism, build Communism, and benefit the worker? . . .

RM: Your question touches on one of the weakest points in our legislation and in the Soviet way of life. The Soviet Constitution guarantees freedom of speech, freedom of the press, assembly, and public demonstrations, but only insofar as these freedoms operate "in the interests of the workers and with the aim of strengthening socialism." But who decides what's in the interest of the workers and what isn't? . . .

. . . [It is felt that] only the party and its institutions can pronounce the final verdict on what is right and what is wrong. But where is the guarantee that their judgments are correct? Not long ago it was fashionable

to say that only the individual can be wrong, the party never. Now we know from history that individual party leaders and the party itself have been wrong many times, and some of their mistakes have persisted for years, for decades, whereas persons thought for years to be "in error" or even downright "enemies of the people" have subsequently been vindicated entirely by the party itself. . . .

. . . Certainly it's understandable that every state will persecute those who agitate against it or who turn to foreign secret services for help. But why may citizens in a socialist society denounce only certain aspects of public life? What if they disapprove of socialism altogether or, as we say today, this or that model of a socialist society? Why can't they enjoy the elementary rights of any democracy, freedom of speech, of opinions, of the press? Is it because in our country the ideological struggle must be fought not through words and concepts but through repression? We've always known that repression can silence people but it can't change their opinions. . . .

. . . The notion that the Central Committee and the Politburo are infallible stubbornly persists in the minds of the Soviet people. But this obsession is no less questionable than the infallibility of the Pope. . . .

. . . But I wouldn't say that every political decision taken by the Soviet government is necessarily wrong and every one taken by a democratic government necessarily right. Even after democratic debates, which allow the opposition to speak up, many governments still go astray. . . . Hasn't the United States government committed any number of mistakes in the past ten years? . . .

. . . We've made our share of blunders. Still you can't deny that Soviet society is advancing, that it's pretty solid, which is more than you can say about many capitalist countries. . . . .

PO: . . . [It seems that] the system enjoys an almost unanimous consensus. . . .

RM: Without opinion polls, which don't exist in the Soviet Union, it's difficult to arrive at any quantitative evaluation. And then, we must explain exactly what we mean by the word "system." If we refer not to a well-defined government but rather to socialism as a social system, then certainly today it claims the consensus of practically the entire population. Therefore it's no use hoping for a change; that would be about as unrealistic as the idea of turning present-day Europe back to the eighteenth century. The system can only be improved . . . just as it can also be worsened by a bad government. . . .

But if by the term "system" we mean not socialism but domination by the party, then I will say that beyond all doubt the vast majority of the population endorses the Soviet Communist Party. Naturally the millions of party and state functionaries, the managers, and most of the intellectuals in government service are anxious to preserve the system; it makes life easier. A more pluralistic order would create too many headaches for them. Then, don't forget too, that if most people approve of Soviet Communism, at least passively, they've never lived under any other system.

So you see, our present form of government possesses such tremendous reserves that neither external pressures nor dissident agitation could, by themselves, bring about fundamental changes. Any change would require the force of these factors combined with an initiative from "above." Many dissidents and emigrants strongly contest this theory of mine, and some of them believe there's no more hope for any initiative from "above." But that's not true.

The Soviet Constitution guarantees freedom of speech, freedom of the press, assembly, and public demonstrations, but only insofar as these freedoms operate "in the interests of the workers and with the aim of strengthening socialism".

Note: Many observations expressed in this interview are less true today than they were in 1980. For example, Soviet papers today allow a great deal of controversial discussion about political matters, and elections for some offices offer voters a choice between candidates. In addition, the Party is much less a final authority on right and wrong.

READING TWO:
THE SOVIET UNION AND SOCIAL SCIENCE THEORY

JERRY HOUGH

EXCERPT; (CAMBRIDGE: HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1977): vii - ix.

[Some observers see the Soviet Union as] a repressive state in which many individual rights are not guaranteed and in which the Marxist ideals of full equality have not been achieved. Yet it recognizes that a great deal of debate is permitted on most policy questions in the Soviet Union and that, within the framework of the basic authoritarianism, an increased tendency to tolerate individual differences is observable. It sees the Brezhnev era—even in comparison with the Khrushchev era—as featuring less repression of individual freedom, more egalitarianism in its social policy, a far greater dispersion of actual power (but not, of course, final authority) from the top political leadership, and greater caution in foreign policy. It insists that there is a politics in the Soviet Union, even on the most important questions, and suggests that the multiplicity of forces struggling to shape the Soviet Union could produce change either for the better or for the worse from an American point of view.

Perhaps most basic of all, this image of the Soviet Union is based on a rather different view of the relationship of the party and society in the Soviet Union. . . . This image contends that the Soviet system has had a broad range of societal supports from its earliest days—perhaps even a very basic legitimacy developing among large segments of the Russian urban population and even those peasants aspiring to move to the city. It treats the Soviet system as a very participatory one, with many societal inputs in the decision-making process and considerable societal influence upon many decisions. It treats even the much-criticized "bureaucrats" of the Soviet Union as, in large part, trained specialists who usually advocate various types of policy change and whose political role must at least in part be understood as analogous to certain kinds of political participation and interest group activity in the West. . . .

A public opinion poll in the Soviet Union might well show considerable dissatisfaction with the political system or certain aspects of it, but to speak about any system being illegitimate in a real sense, one must be able, I think, to say that the population believes that another type of system is better or at least no worse that the present one. We should never forget that for a Russian, the establishment of competitive elections and a multiparty system would mean the abandonment of a system Russians had created and its replacement by a system created in the West. Since democratization would inevitably be extended to the non-Russian republics and the countries of East Europe, it would also mean the loss of Russian control over most, if not all, of these territories. Faced with these choices, many Russians may feel that—to paraphrase Winston Churchill's statement about democracy—the Soviet system is the worst in the world except for all the others.

3/ACTIVITY FOUR

THE ISSUE OF NATIONALITIES

OBJECTIVES:
We think of the Soviet state as an all-powerful, all-controlling force, yet there are many challenges to the power of the state. Particularly important are the conflicts that arise over the governance of the many nationalities and ethnic regions in the Soviet Union. The Soviet population is much more diverse in heritage, custom, and language than most Americans realize. In addition, the Soviet Union is composed of regions widely divergent in history and culture. These great internal differences create a constant tension between the need of minorities for autonomy, and the need of the state for unity. In this activity, we will explore this tension.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Chart and reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:
■ Read and discuss the following text entitled "The Issue of Nationalities."

■ As a follow-up activity to this exercise, you may want to consider the following: Recently, in Boston, Massachusetts, a group of people from the community of Roxbury wanted to free themselves from the jurisdiction of Boston. These people, who were mostly black, felt that the city of Boston did not give adequate care to the concerns of their community, and so they decided to try to secede from Boston. The question of whether they should be allowed to secede was put before the voters, and a majority of these voters decided that the community should not be allowed to secede from the city. Ask students to research this example and discuss this issue of secession, and the way that a decision on secession was reached.

■ As another follow-up activity, you may want to ask students to identify and research several current conflicts involving nationalities/ethnic groups. For instance, they might investigate the relationship between the Palestinians and Israel, the Irish Republican Army and Great Britain, the Miskito Indians and Nicaragua, the conflicts within South Africa. Discuss both the reasons why the leaders of countries involved do not want to grant independence to these groups and discuss the reasons behind the desire of each nationality/ethnic group for independence.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ What is the percentage of Russians in the population?
(Answer: According to the table, 52% of the population is Russian. Since the 1979 census, this percentage has gone down. Russians now compose less than 50% of the population, due to greater birth rates in the Moslem republics.)

■ Here is a list of the 15 republics of the Soviet Union. Find the population and percent of the nationality from which each republic is named. (For example, Lithuania—Lithuanian 2,850,905 1.09%)

Russia	Armenia
Ukraine	Azerbaidjan
Belorussia	Uzbekistan
Moldavia	Kirghizia
Estonia	Kazakhstan
Latvia	Tadzhikistan
Lithuania	Turkmenistan
Georgia	

■ Ask students to identify their ethnic background—Irish, Vietnamese, English, Jewish, African, and so forth. Then in class, or as homework, find out when the students' ancestors arrived in America and when (if ever) they learned English. When did these ancestors begin to think of themselves as Americans? How do their ethnic roots affect their identities? What traditional customs, holidays, or rituals do they still celebrate?

■ How many different nationalities live in the United States? List as many as you can on the board. What are the benefits from having so many nationalities in our country? What issues might be raised in a diverse, pluralistic population?

■ Imagine how life in the United States would be if 25 different languages were spoken. How would travel from area to area be affected? What effects would this have upon communication generally? What effect would it have on news reportage, cinema, television? What else would be affected?

■ What do you think about people in a country being required to learn and share a single language? Under what conditions would such a requirement be fair? Unfair?

■ What special forms of cultural expression do minorities and ethnic groups create in the United States? How do you think the government should relate to these forms of expressions? Control them? Allot special funds for such cultural expression?

■ Whom do you think should decide questions about the jurisdiction of a single region? The central government? The local authorities or inhabitants? Both? A general discussion of the issue of state's rights, both in the Civil War and in the present, may be useful to the class.

READING:
THE ISSUE OF NATIONALITIES

The Soviet Union is composed of many nationalities closely tied to specific geographical regions; these ethnic groups settled in these regions long before the Soviet Union even existed.

Every country hopes that its citizens feel allegiance to the country's basic principles. Many governments strive to harmonize the interests of citizens, encouraging unity and discouraging extraordinary ethnic or ideological conflict. In America, for example, citizens who have immigrated from other countries are encouraged to think of themselves not only as Italian or Vietnamese, but also—and primarily—as Americans. They are asked to pledge their allegiance to America and to respect the fundamental political and economic principles of our country. They are asked to work to protect democracy and the free enterprise, capitalist economic system. This melting together of foreign identities into a larger American self-identity has given America its reputation as a vast "melting pot."

As part of their initiation into a new country, immigrants are encouraged, and in some cases required, to speak the primary language of that country. This is certainly the case in the United States. Bilingual education aims to provide students with proficiency in English. More dramatically, states such as California that have large immigrant populations recently have either considered or passed laws declaring English to be the state's official language. Failure to speak English in certain situations is considered illegal. Even if these measures prove ineffective, it is almost inevitable that the need to participate in the economic system will force people to learn English—people will find it difficult to work or shop without such knowledge. On the other hand, many states are instituting bilingual education, signage, and services, making it possible to a degree for citizens to continue to speak a language other than English. Thus language choice in the United States will continue to be an issue for some time.

In the Soviet Union, the government also strives to create unity among its various ethnic groups. The government wants citizens to think of themselves first as *Soviet* citizens, and secondly as Russians, Lithuanians, Armenians, or Uzbekis. In addition, the government wants all citizens to share the common language of Russian so that the economy and society can function more smoothly.

But unlike most ethnic groups in the United States (with the exception of American Indians), the minorities in the USSR did not choose to immigrate to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is in fact composed of many nationalities closely tied to specific geographical regions; these ethnic groups settled in these regions long before the Soviet Union even existed. All of these Soviet nationalities were at varying times part of the Tsarist Russian empire; and thus the Soviet system was brought to the population, rather than the other way around.

When the Tsarist government fell in the revolution, the various nationalities, as political units, were thrown into limbo. The old government that had controlled them was gone. During the reorganization of the Soviet system that followed, some leaders from these minority groups did emerge, but for the most part the Russian nationality remained dominant. In fact, the revolution and subsequent civil war were both fought essentially between Russians, with the various minority groups accepting the outcome. Still, in the years that followed the revolution, the Bolsheviks realized that good relations with the various minorities were vital to the success of the new system. Lenin understood that if the Bolsheviks angered or alienated these minority groups, the groups could turn against the revolution. But if the various nationalist groups felt that

the Bolsheviks would allow them to continue their cultural heritages, they would be less likely to resist the establishment of Soviet government in their regions. Understanding this, the Bolsheviks assured the nationalist groups that they would be able to continue living according to their customs and languages.

Yet the Soviets were at the same time determined to create a unified socialist state, and this required breaking down the differences between minorities. Consequently, people continued to speak their native languages—Uzbeki, Georgian, Armenian, and so forth—but they were also required to learn Russian. The Russian language was taught as a second language in schools in the non-Russian republics. People continued to learn the history of their ethnic group, but they were also taught to think in terms of Marxism and Leninism. Minority groups were instructed to place Soviet ideology and nationalism before their ethnic background. Such tensions between ethnic minority customs and dominant Soviet culture remain in Soviet life to this day.

In all, over 100 nationalities can be found in the Soviet Union, and over 100 languages are spoken there. The following table lists the 100 largest nationalities within the Soviet Union. This table, based on the 1979 Soviet census (the most recent census published in the USSR), includes the total number of people that comprise each nationality, and it describes the percentage of the total population that each nationality represents. The table also notes the main geographical location and main traditional religion of each group.

TABLE 1:
NATIONALITIES OF THE USSR IN 1979

Obtained from the 1979 Soviet Census
(As of 1988, the most recent census taken in the Soviet Union).

NATIONALITY	TOTAL	POPULATION USSR/%	GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION	TRADITIONAL RELIGION(S)
1. Russian	137,397,089	52.42		Orthodox
2. Ukrainian	42,347,387	16.16	Southwest	Orthodox/Uniate
3. Uzbek	12,455,978	4.75	Central Asia	Muslim (Sunni)
4. Belorussian	9,462,715	3.61	Southwest	Orthodox/Uniate
5. Kazakh	6,556,442	2.50	Central Asia	Muslim (Sunni)
6. Tatar[a]	6,317,468	2.41	Volga-Urals	Muslim (Sunni)
7. Azerbaidjani	5,477,330	2.09	Transcaucasia	Muslim (Shiite)
8. Armenian	4,151,241	1.58	Transcaucasia	Gregorian Christian
9. Georgian	3,570,504	1.36	Transcaucasia	Orthodox/Muslim (Sunni)
10. Moldavian	2,968,224	1.13	Southwest	Orthodox
11. Tadzhik	2,897,697	1.11	Central Asia	Muslim (Sunni)
12. Lithuania	2,850,905	1.09	Baltic	Catholic
13. Turkmen	2,027,913	0.77	Central Asia	Muslim (Sunni)
14. German	1,936,214	0.74	Central Asia	Lutheran/Catholic
15. Kirghiz	1,906,271	0.73	Central Asia	Muslim (Sunni)
16. Jewish	1,810,876	0.69	dispersed	Judaic
17. Chuvash	1,751,366	0.67	Volga-Urals	Orthodox/animist

Note: a. Presumably includes 400,000 Crimean Tatars, a separate nationality in political disgrace after 1944.

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NATIONALITIES OF THE USSR IN 1979

NATIONALITY	TOTAL	POPULATION USSR/%	GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION	TRADITIONAL RELIGION(S)
Peoples of Daghestan 18–27)	(1,656,676)	(0.63)	North Caucasus	Muslim (Sunni)
18. Avar	482,844	0.18		
19. Lezghian	382,611	0.15		
20. Darghin	287,282	0.11		
21. Kumyk	228,418	0.09		
22. Lak	100,148	0.04		
23. Tabasaran	75,239	0.03		
24. Nogai	59,546	0.02		
25. Rutul	15,032	0.006		
26. Tsakhur	13,478	0.005		
27. Agul	12,078	0.005		
28. Latvian	1,439,037	0.55	Baltic	Lutheran/Catholic
29. Bashkir	1,371,452	0.52	Volga-Urals	Muslim (Sunni)
30. Mordvinian	1,191,765	0.45	Volga-Urals	Orthodox/animist
31. Polish	1,150,991	0.44	Southwest	Catholic
32. Estonian	1,019,851	0.39	Baltic	Lutheran
33. Chechen	755,782	0.29	North Caucasus	Muslim (Sunni)
34. Udmurt	713,696	0.27	Volga-Urals	Orthodox/animist
35. Mari	621,961	0.24	Volga-Urals	Orthodox/animist
36. Ossetian	541,893	0.21	North Caucasus	Orthodox/Muslim (Sunni)
Komi and Komi-Permyak (37–38)	(477,468)	(0.18)	Volga-Urals	Orthodox
37. Komi	326,700	0.12		
38. Komi-Permyak	150,768	0.06		
39. Korean	388,926	0.15	Central Asia	Buddhist/Confucian
40. Bulgarian	361,082	0.14	Southwest	Orthodox
41. Buryat	352,646	0.13	Siberia	Buddhist
42. Greek	343,809	0.13	Southwest	Orthodox
43. Yakut	328,018	0.13	Siberia	Orthodox/animist
44. Kabardinian	321,719	0.12	North Caucasus	Muslim (Sunni)
45. Karakalpak	303,324	0.12	Central Asia	Muslim (Sunni)
46. Uighur	210,612	0.08	Central Asia	Muslim (Sunni)
47. Gypsy	209,159	0.08	dispersed	Christian (various)
48. Ingush	186,198	0.07	North Caucasus	Muslim (Sunni)
49. Gagauz	173,179	0.07	Southwest	Orthodox
50. Hungarian	170,553	0.07	Southwest	Catholic
51. Tuvinian	166,082	0.06	Siberia	Buddhist
Peoples of the North (52-74)	(158,324)	(0.06)	Siberia	animist/Orthodox
52. Nenets	29,894	0.01		
53. Evenki	27,294	0.01		
54. Khanty	20,934	0.008		
55. Chukchi	14,000	0.005		
56. Eveny	12,523	0.005		

NATIONALITY	TOTAL	POPULATION USSR/%	GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION	TRADITIONAL RELIGION(S)
57. Nanai	10,516	0.004	Siberia	animist/Orthodox
58. Koryak	7,879	0.003		
59. Mansi	7,563	0.003		
60. Dolgan	5,053	0.002		
61. Nivkhi	4,397	0.002		
62. Slkup	3,565	0.001		
63. Ulchi	2,552	0.001		
64. Saami (Lapp)	1,888	0.001		
65. Udegei	1,551	0.001		
66. Eskimo	1,510	0.001		
67. Itelmen	1,370	0.001		
68. Orochi	1,198	0.000		
69. Ket	1,122	0.000		
70. Nganasan	867	0.000		
71. Yukagir	835	0.000		
72. Tofa	763	0.000		
73. Aleut	546	0.000		
74. Negidal	504	0.000		
75. Kalmyk	146,631	0.06	North Caucasus	Buddhist
76. Karelian	138,429	0.05	Baltic	Orthodox
77. Karachai	131,074	0.05	North Caucasus	Muslim (Sunni)
78. Rumanian	128,792	0.05	Southwest	Orthodox
79. Kurdish	115,858	0.04	Transcaucasia	Muslim (Sunni)
80. Adygei	108,711	0.04	North Caucasus	Muslim (Sunni)
81. Turkish	92,689	0.04	Transcaucasia	Muslim (Sunni)
82. Abkhaz	90,915	0.03	Transcaucasia	Muslim (Sunni)
83. Finnish	77,079	0.03	Baltic	Lutheran/Orthodox
84. Khakas	70,776	0.03	Siberia	animist/Orthodox
85. Balkar	66,334	0.03	North Caucasus	Muslim (Sunni)
86. Altai	60,015	0.02	Siberia	animist/Orthodox
87. Dungan	51,694	0.02	Central Asia	Muslim (Sunni)
88. Cherkess	46,470	0.02	North Caucasus	Muslim (Sunni)
89. Persian	31,313	0.01	Central Asia	Muslim (Shiite)
90. Abaza	29,497	0.01	North Caucasus	Muslim (Sunni)
91. Assyrian	25,170	0.01	Transcaucasia	Nestorian/Christian
92. Tat	22,441	0.009	Transcaucasia	Muslim (Shiite)/Judaic
93. Baluchi	18,997	0.007	Central Asia	Muslim (Sunni)
94. Czech	17,812	0.007	Southwest	Catholic
95. Shor	16,033	0.006	Siberia	animist/Orthodox
96. Slovak	9,409	0.004	Southwest	Catholic
97. Veps	8,094	0.003	Baltic	Orthodox
98. Udin	6,863	0.003	Transcaucasia	Orthodox
99. Karaim	3,341	0.001	Southwest	Judaic (Karaite)
100. Mongolian	3,228	0.001	Siberia	Buddhist
Others	67,166	0.03		
TOTAL	**262,084,654**			

Minorities and Political Control

In the Soviet Union, if a given minority wants to express itself publicly, it must receive permission from the government, for the government controls the printing of books, the content of television and radio shows, and the training of religious leaders. The government must decide to release the money and other resources necessary to produce minority culture. If the state thinks a given minority is pushing its ethnic identity too far, and so neglecting *Soviet* identity, the state can deny resources and permissions for groups to publish, broadcast, or hold meetings or rallies.

Minority groups occasionally protest against the Soviet government for restricting cultural expression.

However, in the Soviet republics the government and economy are administered primarily by members of local nationalities. This means, for example, that the republic of Uzbekistan is run primarily by Uzbekis, a people of Islamic culture. Even if the highest leadership in the republic has proven their loyalty to the Soviet socialist system, and speaks Russian as well as Uzbeki, these people can administer the republic in ways that allow Uzbeki language, cultural practices, and Islamic religious identity to flourish. As a result, knowledge of Russian language and Soviet identity remains minimal in Uzbekistan, which deeply frustrates and concerns the Russian leaders in Moscow. The fact that the government controls resources for cultural expression does not necessarily mean that the central goverment will remain in firm control of these resources. Thus even in the enactment of government resources, there is tension between regional and central aims.

Minority groups occasionally protest against the Soviet government for restricting cultural expression. Perhaps the largest protest came in the Spring of 1988 when hundreds of thousands of Armenians demonstrated and went on strike. The Armenians demanded that Nagorno-Karabakh, a district within the Muslim republic of Azerbaidjan, be placed under the control of the government of Armenia instead. In this district (approximately the size of a large American county) live over one hundred and twenty thousand Christian Armenians who feel that they are mistreated by the Azerbaidjanis. The protestors believed that the interests of Armenians in the district would best be protected by taking the district out of Azerbaidjanian control.

The protests and strikes over this issue took place in the republic of Armenia and in several locations within Azerbaidjan. At one point (according to the Soviet government), crowds of Azerbaidjanis went on a rampage in the city of Sumgait and killed over 30 Armenians there. To restore order the Soviet authorities called in troops to patrol the streets of both Armenia and Azerbaidjan. The troops did not need to fight with protestors—the intimidating presence of the troops made the demonstrators back off. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev went on television to appeal to the protestors, and he promised that the government would try to find an acceptable solution. In April 1988, the government announced that the Armenians in Azerbaidjan would begin to receive greater economic and cultural resources. More Armenian books would be published. Armenian radio and television programs would be broadcast into the region, and more money would be devoted to projects that would benefit the Armenian population. In addition, the government replaced those top party leaders in both Armenia and Azerbaidjan who had been in charge when the trouble broke out. However, the government insisted that Nagorno-Karabakh could not be removed from the jurisdiction of Azerbaidjan. The government said that such a precedent might lead to demands by many other groups to change the borders of other republics. The Soviets also claimed that the majority of the people of the Soviet Union would not approve of such a transfer.

Conflicts in Lithuania provide another example of the tensions around minorities in the USSR. For centuries Russians have ruled over the other nationalities that make up the present-day Soviet Union, and Russians still occupy the highest positions in

society. According to many observers, this longstanding Russian dominance often makes the Russians act arrogantly toward the minorities. In the republic of Lithuania, the citizens are predominantly Catholic, and they share a strong group identity. According to the 1979 census, nearly 98 percent of Lithuanians consider Lithuanian to be their natural language, and more than half are practicing Catholics, despite the official Soviet doctrine of atheism. Over the years there have been many protests against Russian rule in Lithuania. Many of these protests celebrate the years between World War I and World War II when Lithuania enjoyed independence from the Soviet Union, and thus from Russian domination. Lithuanians fondly recall the years of national freedom with celebrations that, in turn, inspire Lithuanian activists to continue the struggle for the freedom to practice Catholicism, to have more churches opened and priests trained, and so forth. Neither the Lithuanians nor the Soviet authorities have resorted to widespread violence, but the Soviets have at times arrested and imprisoned Lithuanian protest leaders.

These tensions that exist between nationalities in the Soviet Union, and the resulting conflicts between the central and regional governments, show us that the Soviet Union is not the uniform society that we think it is. We see as well that the authority of the state, although great, is not accepted completely by all Soviet citizens; in fact, this authority is often successfully challenged. No doubt the current movement to liberalize the Soviet Union will give still greater voice to these conflicts.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

3/ ACTIVITY FIVE

TEACHING ABOUT *GLASNOST* and *PERESTROIKA*

written by Alan Shapiro

OBJECTIVES:

These days one hears a great deal about *glasnost* and *perestroika*. The words *glasnost* (translated as "openness" or "publicity") and *perestroika* (translated as "restructuring") are heard so frequently now in the U.S. media that, like *sputnik*, they may soon require no elaboration. But at the moment, teaching students about *glasnost* and *perestroika* requires a great deal of discussion.

In this curriculum, we have worked to explore our image of the Soviet Union as a tightly controlled society, a society in which open dissent from official policies has rarely been tolerated. Recently, however, Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* have created an unprecedented openness in Soviet society and have accelerated social change. This activity will help students understand these policies and their consequences.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:

■ ***Glasnost***

This activity is best prefaced with a review of Soviet experience under the rule of Joseph Stalin. Go over once again the main points discussed in Chapter 2, Activity #3 ("Stalin") to remind students of the historical background against which Gorbachev's reforms must be seen.

After this review, provide students with some sense of the reforms that have taken place following Stalin's death. The present era is not the first time significant changes have occurred in Soviet society. After Stalin, the Communist Party was restored as the ruling institution in the country, and the Party established policies designed to prevent subsequent rulers from becoming dictators of the sort that Stalin was. In addition, many of the excesses of the Stalin era were eliminated; mass terror ceased, and millions were freed from labor camps. But despite these reforms, certain features of the Soviet system endured. The Soviet Union remained a one-party state, and the Soviet economy remained strongly centralized, with little room for private

initiative. And although there was a brief "thaw" in Soviet cultural life during the Khrushchev period, the media and the arts remained strictly censored.

Gorbachev's reforms have affected most of these features of the Soviet system. Significantly, he has called repeatedly for openness and criticism; he has said publicly that Stalin was guilty of "enormous and unforgivable" crimes. He has called for elections in which voters can choose from more than one candidate. The Soviet government has released a number of prominent dissidents and refuseniks from prison and has permitted an increase in Jewish emigration. Soviet newspapers now report regularly on events that previously would have been considered off-limits: for instance, the Soviet public read reports about recent ethnically motivated street demonstrations in Alma-Ata (protesting the replacement of a Kazakh party leader with a Russian) and the public was also told about KGB officials who were disciplined for the illegal arrest of a reporter investigating government corruption in the Ukraine.

Many other examples of the new "openness" can be found: Soviet TV viewers hear American views of the Soviet Union through such programs as *The Phil Donahue Show* and through spacebridges featuring, for example, American congressmen and congresswomen. Films (such as *Repentance*) and novels (such as *Children of the Arabat*) which openly attack the Stalinist system are now seen and read in the Soviet Union. The public also has access to other forbidden works, like Boris Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago* and the art of Marc Chagall.

But *glasnost* has its limits. The Soviet Union remains a one-party state whose top leaders determine policy, including the policies of *glasnost*. The Gorbachev leadership, to some degree, still controls the interpretation of history, determining what will and will not be revealed about the Soviet past. In addition, some dissidents remain in prison and psychiatric hospitals; many Jews remain who wish to emigrate. And censorship continues. It is not possible to publish an article in *Pravda* that criticizes, for example, Gorbachev himself, or current Soviet policies on arms control. Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*, a work which describes the Stalinist prison system in detail, still has not been published in the Soviet Union.

As of the writing of this curriculum, *glasnost* seems to have a great potential to transform the Soviet system, but many wonder if it will last. Since the policies of *glasnost* seem to develop daily, it would be a good idea to have students search through *The New York Times Index* or the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* for the most recent accounts available on the state of reforms in the Soviet Union. Identify one or two recent articles for students to read and discuss.

■ *Perestroika*

"Perestroika," writes Gorbachev, "is a revolution . . . *Perestroika* also means a resolute and radical elimination of obstacles hindering social and economic development, of outdated methods of managing the economy."

We have already discussed the Soviet economy, learning that it is mainly a planned economy controlled by government officials. Theoretically, this planned system provides for the needs of citizens insofar as they are determined by these officials. And as we have pointed out, this highly centralized system achieved substantial success for many years. After beginning in 1917 as a poor, backward country, the Soviet Union became an industrialized society, all the while providing its citizens with inexpensive housing, free health care and education and an improving standard of living, in addition to virtually eliminating unemployment.

Key to Gorbachev's program of perestroika is a partial dismantling of centralized control.

By the late 1970s, however, the Soviet economy had stagnated. The Soviets have attributed this stagnation to, among other things, lack of incentive for workers (who are rarely fired regardless of performance), the absence of competition among enterprises, an emphasis on quantity rather than quality in production, and a serious lag in technological development.

Key to Gorbachev's program of *perestroika* is a partial dismantling of this ineffective system of centralized control. The State Planning Committee is no longer to have day-to-day control over industry, and the government will no longer set prices for every commodity. The Gorbachev program also calls for competition among industries, increased pay differentials for workers, the legalization of some private businesses and services, joint business ventures between Soviet and foreign companies, and introduction of quality control mechanisms.

Gorbachev writes: "We have come to the conclusion that unless we activate the human factor . . . it will be impossible for us to change the situation in the country. . . . So the initial task of restructuring—an indispensable condition, necessary if it is to be successful—is to 'wake up' those people who have fallen asleep."[3] For Gorbachev, restructuring economic and social reality in the Soviet Union requires both *perestroika* and *glasnost;* these are two complementary parts to a program of change that has taken many Americans by surprise. The Soviets seem to believe that open, wide-ranging discussions and criticisms, along with an awakening of the intellectual and creative life of the Soviet Union, are necessary if the Soviet economy is to be restructured successfully.

A recent debate in the Soviet press provides a good example of the arguments and intentions behind the liberalization of Soviet society and the Soviet economy. In March of 1988, the Soviet newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossia*

published, in the form of a letter to the editor, what amounted to a manifesto *against* Gorbachev's reforms. Speaking through a Leningrad chemistry teacher named Nina Andreyeva, the conservative opposition mounted an attack against *glasnost* and *perestroika*. Responding to Gorbachev's attack on the "personality cult" that is said to surround Stalin and obscure his crimes, the writer insisted upon an uncritical respect for Stalin. As she said: "Included in the formula of 'personality cult' are the industrialization, the collectivization and the cultural revolution which made of our country a great world power." This letter, entitled "I Cannot Betray My Principles," served as a rallying point for the conservatives trying to stop Gorbachev's reforms.

The answer to the charges in this letter came in an unsigned article (supposedly written by a high-ranking member of the Politburo) published in *Pravda* in April. This article was seen as a summary of Gorbachev's commitment to change, and it gave great momentum to the reform movement initiated by Gorbachev and his followers.

Excerpts from this article in *Pravda*, entitled "Principles of Perestroika: Revolutionary Ideas and Actions," are provided for students to read and discuss.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- According to the *Pravda* article, in what ways is the Soviet Union being restructured? How does the author define "democracy"?
- Why does the author disagree with the letter entitled "I Cannot Betray My Principles?" What opinion does the author have of Stalin?

READING:

"PRINCIPLES OF PERESTROIKA: REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS AND ACTIONS"

EXCERPT; *PRAVDA*, 5 APRIL 1988. REPRINTED IN *THE CURRENT DIGEST OF THE SOVIET PRESS*, XL, NO. 14 (4 MAY 1988).

Cover of Soviet edition of *Perestroika*, by Mikhail Gorbachev.

The April (1985) plenary session of the Party Central Committee began a new stage of socialist development, one aimed at a qualitative renewal of Soviet society and at restructuring. . . .

The conclusion of the Party and the people, of everyone who has a deep and sincere feeling for the country, for socialism and for our common future, was unanimous: There is no alternative to restructuring. The rejection of restructuring, or even its postponement, is fraught with very serious costs both for the internal development of our society and for the international positions of the Soviet state and of socialism as a whole. . . .

. . . The concept, the strategy and the tactics of restructuring have been worked out. Its revolutionary principles have been clearly defined: more democracy, more socialism. . . .

Over the past three years, we have changed . . . We are honestly and candidly facing up to the facts, we are talking out loud about painful subjects, we are jointly seeking ways of solving problems that have accumulated over the decades. Without a resolute turn toward democratization, the real advances that have already been noted in tackling a number of social and economic tasks would have been impossible.

We are all learning to live in conditions of expanding democracy and openness, and we are going through an important schooling process. This process is not easy. It has proved to be more difficult to free ourselves from the old ways of thinking and acting than we had supposed. But the main thing that unites us today is the realization that there is no turning back. It is obvious that turning back would be fatal. . . .

In and of themselves, the debates, their nature and thrust, attest to the democratization of our society. The diversity of opinions, assessments and positions constitutes a highly important sign of the times and evidence of the socialist pluralism of opinions that actually exists today. . . .

Confusion and perplexity have arisen in the minds of some people. The development of democratization, the rejection of administrative-command methods of leadership and management, the expansion of openness and the lifting of all sorts of prohibitions and restrictions have given rise to apprehension: Aren't we shaking the very foundations of socialism? Aren't we subjecting the principles of Marxism-Leninism to revision? . . .

"Don't rock the boat!" others say, trying to scare people. "You'll overturn it and destroy socialism."

And there are some who suggest bluntly that we should stop, or even turn back.

The lengthy article "I Cannot Betray My Principles," which appeared in the newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossia* on March 13, 1988, was an echo of these sentiments. . . .

Let us specify: Any author has the right to defend his own viewpoint. It is this approach that is now becoming firmly established in our society, thanks to openness, thanks to restructuring. The task of a press organ is to present various positions for the judgment of readers and to define its own attitude toward those positions. . . .

. . . [But] the article is not constructive. This verbose publication under a pretentious name did not find room to try to understand the essence of a single problem of restructuring. . . . [The] processes and restructuring itself are linked only with difficulties and negative consequences.

In this "letter to the editors," readers perhaps have seen for the first time in such a concentrated form not a search, not reflections and not even simply an expression of perplexity and confusion in the face of the complex and acute questions that life poses, but nonacceptance of the very idea of renewal and a rigid exposition of a very definite position, a position that is essentially conservative and dogmatic.

In point of fact, two basic theses permeate the article's entire content: Why all this restructuring, and haven't we gone too far in questions of democratization and openness? The article calls on us to make corrections and adjustments in questions of restructuring; otherwise, "the authorities" will have to save socialism. . . .

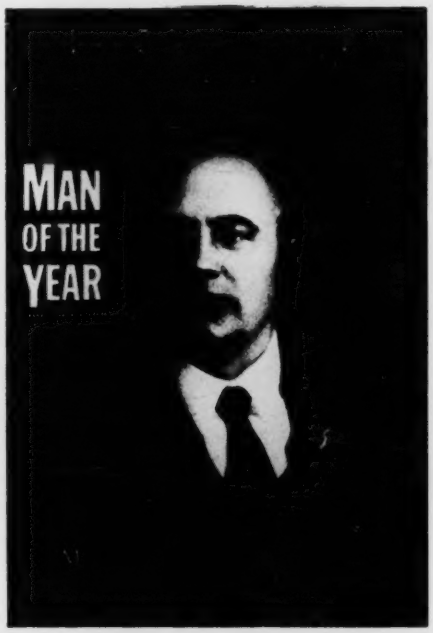
So, how should socialism be "saved" today?

Should we preserve authoritarian methods and the practices of the unthinking execution of orders and the suppression of initiative? Should we preserve a system under which bureaucratism, the absence of control, corruption, extortion and petit bourgeois degeneration flourished luxuriantly?

Or should we return to Leninist principles, the essence of which is democracy, social justice, economic accountability and respect for the honor, life and dignity of the individual? In the face of real difficulties and the unsatisfied requirements of the people, do we have a right to keep to the same approaches that took shape in the 1930s and the 1940s? Hasn't the time come for a clear-cut distinction between the essence of socialism and the historically limited forms of its implementation? Hasn't the time come to investigate our history in a scientific-critical way, above all in order to change the world in which we live and to draw some harsh lessons for the future?

To all intents and purposes, the publication in *Sovetskaya Rossia* takes the first path. The second path is dictated by life, which has demanded restructuring. . . .

. . . A patriot is not someone who shouts loudly about an alleged "internal threat" to socialism or who, joining ranks with some political extremists, looks everywhere for internal enemies, "counterrevolutionary nations," etc. A patriot is someone who, fearing no difficulties, acts in the interests of the country and for the good of the people. We need constructive patriotism, not a contemplative patriotism or a patriotism that is only verbal. The patriotism of socialist transformations, not jingoism. A patriotism that is not only based on love for one's own native area but is permeated with pride for the accomplishments of the great homeland of socialism. . . .



Restructuring is picking up speed. One cannot help but see this. The very atmosphere in society has changed, and so has the way people feel. On the whole, workers, collective farmers and the intelligentsia are acting with a sense of responsibility for the cause of restructuring, for the country and for socialism. We must not be afraid of movement in thinking, of searches for the best ways of realizing the potential of socialist democracy. . . .

. . . Democratism is impossible without freedom of thought and speech, without an open and broad clash of opinions, without examining our life with a critical eye. . . .

Today there are no forbidden subjects. Magazines, publishing houses and studios decide for themselves what to put before the public. But the appearance of the article "I Cannot Betray My Principles" is an attempt to revise Party decisions little by little. At meetings in the Party Central committee, it has been said several times that the Soviet press is not a private shop, that Communists who write for the press and editors should feel a sense of responsibility for articles and publications. In this case, the newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossia*, which, frankly, has done a great deal for restructuring, departed from this principle.

Arguments, debates and polemics are necessary, of course. More of them await us in the future. There are also quite a few obstacles ahead, mines laid by the past. We all must work together to clear away these mines. We need arguments that help to advance restructuring and that lead to a consolidation of forces and to solidarity around restructuring, not to fragmentation. . . .

We will firmly and steadfastly follow the revolutionary principles of restructuring: more openness, more democracy, more socialism.

4

THE SOVIET ECONOMY

Soviet miners keep warm with a cup of tea at break time.

4
THE SOVIET ECONOMY

INTRODUCTION

Most of us have heard that the Soviet economy doesn't work well. We hear that Soviet citizens must wait in long lines to buy the most basic goods. We know the Soviets face food shortages and that their technologies are unsophisticated compared to those of the United States or Japan. Inequalities also exist—the Soviet elite have had access to products that common citizens lack. As the present leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, has admitted, the Soviet economy has many serious problems.

On a basic level, the Soviets want from their economy what we want from ours: high quality goods produced with efficiency. The failure of the Soviet economy to achieve these goals has led Soviet leaders to acknowledge that some tension exists between socialist values and economic achievement. But we should not take this admission to be a wholesale endorsement of our values and our economic system. As the Soviets wrestle with the shortcomings of their system, we should recognize that they approach the problem from a perspective quite different from ours. In the words of the authors of one textbook on the Soviet economy: "We are not suggesting that value judgments should not be made in comparing economic systems; rather, we are pointing out that such judgments must be made with the explicit understanding that they are value judgments and should be treated as such."[1]

In the United States, we tend to separate politics and economics. The Constitution, for instance, sets up rules for political process but says nothing about economics. We use two concepts to describe our system: Our political

system is "democratic" and our economic system is "capitalist." In very simple terms, we ask politicians to act in the public interest, but we expect business people to act in their own interests or in the interests of stockholders, although some government restrictions upon business protect the public interest. In the Soviet Union, on the other hand, the economic system has functioned hand in hand with the political system. People who make political decisions in the Soviet Union are given great control over the economy, *and* economic managers are frequently a part of the political system. One word—communism—describes both their political and economic goals.

As it is usually explained, communists (and socialists as well) believe that people must in some way own the factories in which they work. Otherwise, the worker's labor benefits only a small group of owners, or even a single owner. This owner will sell the fruits of the worker's labor for a profit, and with the riches acquired, this owner can extend his/her influence in society. The Soviets reject the notion of an economy based upon private property, and instead work for an economic system in which all people share in ownership. In this system, economic transactions are said to be made in the interest of the public. It is this very different understanding of the relationship between economics and politics that we will explore in this chapter.

GENERALIZATIONS FOR THE TEACHER

- Economic systems reflect larger social values and political beliefs.
- The values that inform the respective economies of the United States and the Soviet Union are different.
- A tension exists in the Soviet economy between much-needed reform and the traditional Soviet goal of economic security.
- The basic necessities of life are provided for by the Soviet economic system, though the standard of living in the Soviet Union is well below the standard of many other industrialized countries. In the Soviet Union, the demand for goods and services exceeds supplies.
- The Soviets want an innovative and prospering economy, but they want to develop this economy without sacrificing their basic values.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SOVIET ECONOMY

OBJECTIVES:
This activity introduces students to the basic aims that inform the Soviet economy, and it provides a glimpse into the current problems of this economy.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:
■ Read and discuss "Introduction to the Soviet Economy" with students.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
■ Why do you think the Soviet economy is structured as it is? What goals do the Soviets seem to have in mind? What benefits might come from such a system? What drawbacks might result?

■ What motivates a student to work hard—in school or on an athletic team or at a job? When you don't work hard, why is this so? What do you think motivates teachers? parents?

■ Suppose that you know that you would never be fired or that you could easily find another job if you were fired. Would you still work hard? Why or why not? Are "working hard" and "doing a good job" the same thing? What constitutes a job well done?

■ Recall a time you competed with others for a position, a prize or someone's approval. What were the pluses and minuses of this situation?

■ Suppose that you owned a shoe factory, and you knew that as long as you made 10,000 pairs of shoes a year, regardless of their quality or style, you would make as much money as you did the year before. What would motivate you to improve quality and style?

■ A competitive system is considered advantageous because it stimulates people to work hard, offering success in the form of higher salaries and profits. This system also carries the disadvantage of insecure employment—despite their good work, some people may be fired because the company they work for is not doing well. Can you think of any other advantages or disadvantages to a competitive economic system? of a cooperative system?

READING:
INTRODUCTION TO THE SOVIET ECONOMY

The Soviet economic system has done much for the Soviet people since the Russian Revolution in 1917.

Lenin, and others who instigated the Russian Revolution, wanted to bring the ideas of Karl Marx to life. They thought it would be more fair to workers if property was taken from private hands, and was instead owned by all the people and managed for the people by the government. The Russian Revolution intended to end rule by property owners, and so bring about the end of capitalism. Today in the Soviet Union, the state does indeed own and operate all banks, factories and farms. (However, individuals and families still own consumer objects such as cars, houses, clothes, and so forth, and some individuals are allowed to run small private businesses and family farms.)

For decades the Soviet economy has been a "planned" economy. This means that members of the government—economists, accountants, lawyers, managers—have decided how many of a given item to produce, how this item should be produced and who should produce it, what price the item should sell for, and so on. In theory, such central planning ensures that the most necessary items are produced cheaply, so benefitting all people. Such a system is obviously quite different from our own. Our capitalist system is based on the belief that all of society will benefit by allowing individuals to pursue their self-interests. Since they want to make a profit, producers will make only what people want to buy, and in this way the consumer's demands will be met.

To understand better the difference between a planned and a market economy, consider how each system might produce cereal. In a market economy, there might be many types of cereals. Someone may decide that a new cereal they have in mind would sell better than existing cereals on the market. This person can try to borrow money from individuals or from a bank, and then start a cereal company. This person might obtain a loan even if the basic ingredients of this new cereal are the same as existing brands. For in a market economy, anyone can try to introduce a new product. The cereal manufacturer might put effort into a new flavor or package or in some other marketing approach. Some manufacturers may even produce several cereals that are very similar, thus competing with themselves! In a *planned* economy, however, the government might decide that only one kind of cereal is necessary—this might seem more efficient than spending money on several different brands and their advertising. That is, in a planned economy, competition often is considered as duplication, and thus a waste of resources.

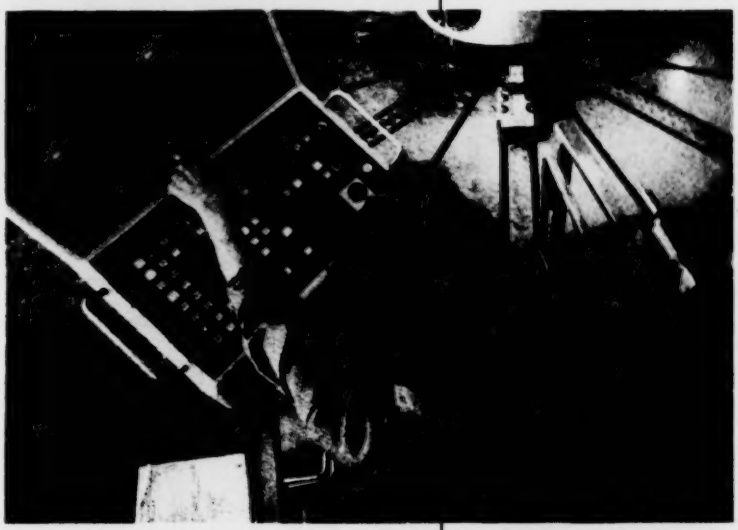
Consider how difficult it must be for a single group of planners to consider all the details necessary for marketing even a single kind of cereal. Farmers must produce

the required wheat. Manufacturers must produce tractors and other farm equipment. Drivers, cereal processors, packagers, and distributors must be chosen. Think too of the problems that might arise. A drought might occur, resulting in a wheat shortage. A country that provides sugar may no longer be able to do so. Prices might change, or transportation facilities might break down. Since so many things can happen, and so many decisions must be made, it is not surprising to hear that the Soviet system of planning usually fails to achieve the desired results. (Of course, our market economy also does not achieve all that we wish for, in part because the economy is *not* planned. With the ups and downs of the marketplace, workers sometimes lose jobs and wages, and companies sometimes go bankrupt.)

Faced with the inability of the government to effectively plan and coordinate production, the Soviets under Gorbachev have called for a complete restructuring of their economy. This has meant the incorporation of some features of our market economy into the Soviet system. The exact changes required are, as of this writing, still being debated. But the basic aim is to create incentives for business managers and workers—managers and workers will be paid in part according to the profit they produce. If an enterprise can't produce a profit, it may be allowed to go bankrupt; this is something the Soviet Union has never allowed before. In addition, workers who do not work effectively will see their wages decrease.

The Soviets also intend to place a greater emphasis on the *quality* of goods. Before, businesses were required to produce a certain *quantity* of an object. If the enterprise met its quota, employees were rewarded. There was, however, almost no test for quality—objects produced for sale could be ugly or made poorly and this would not matter. Now items must pass quality tests or be thrown out, and enterprises are rewarded only for the goods that pass these quality tests. In some Soviet industries in 1987, for example, over 20 percent of the goods produced were thrown out for insufficient quality, and these workers saw their wages decrease. Although many companies in the United States inspect for the quality of goods, in our economy, quality is said to be measused best by consumers. If consumers don't want to buy something because it is not attractive or because it wears out too quickly, the producer loses business to another company. (Unless, of course, in the logic of "planned obsolescence," the product is *designed* to wear out quickly.) It is in the interests of the business owner to produce something people will choose to buy. Since the Soviets do not have competing businesses, quality control is left to government officials or store managers.

The Soviet economic system has done much for the Soviet people since the Russian Revolution in 1917. Under state planning, the country was rapidly industrialized, and standards of living—housing, food, health care, and education—rose dramatically. The lives of children in the 1950s were completely different from those of their parents or grandparents. Though still trailing far behind the United States, Japan, and other countries, by the 1970s the Soviet Union had made great progress.



Automation in a modern Soviet factory.

Privately-run market in the Soviet Union.

Grocery stores run by the state usually offer only one type of cheese or meat. For variety, and to purchase fruits and fresh vegetables, people also shop at private markets.

For instance, there is officially no unemployment in the Soviet Union—in fact, there are more jobs than there are workers. When an industry or government office is closed, those workers affected are given new jobs. Such guaranteed employment is sometimes a problem, for it reduces the incentive of some workers, but it also provides each worker with enough money to take care of a family. In addition, housing is provided cheaply by the government, for it is considered the right of every person. These homes are not large—in Soviet cities, most people live in apartments or in communal settings. Thus there is still need for more housing in the Soviet Union.

The state also has greatly reduced hunger by providing inexpensive staples, such as bread, dairy products, eggs, and meats. The state subsidizes much of the actual costs, and prices rarely change. But the food distribution system is not without serious drawbacks. Shoppers typically wait in long lines to buy the freshest or most desired items. According to one source, the total Soviet population spends 65 billion hours on shopping each year, most of it on standing in lines.[2] Grocery stores run by the state usually offer only one type of cheese or meat. For variety, and to purchase fruits and fresh vegetables, people also shop at private markets. At these markets, farmers sell food grown on their own land, land which is separated from the large state farms. The food in private markets is much better than that at state stores, and it is also more expensive—sometimes ten times as much.

Soviet-made televisions and kitchen appliances are widely available, though there are often complaints about the poor quality of these products. But to purchase a new automobile, a person must often wait several years. A used car is more readily available, but because of this availability, used cars cost more than new ones. Products such as records are also available, although most albums are collections of songs by different bands. Only a few of the most popular bands have albums composed entirely of their own music.

On the whole, there are in the Soviet Union fewer goods available than people want to buy. People generally have more money than they can spend. (This is one reason why there is almost no advertising in the Soviet Union—it has not been needed.) The Soviet system is thus a "shortage economy"; by contrast, the United States, with more goods than people can afford, is called a "surplus economy."

Over the years the Soviet people have responded to the shortcomings of their economy by setting up "gray" or "black" markets. Gray markets are not a part of the government's economic plan, but they are not illegal. In the gray market, electricians may work privately for more money than their normal wages; dentists may earn money after their day at the state clinic is complete. Black markets, on the other hand, *are* illegal, although the people involved in them are often not punished. For example, a truck driver might siphon gas from his/her firm's truck and sell the gas to friends. Such activities are widespread in the Soviet Union.

Before Gorbachev, officials had shifted back and forth, either ignoring or trying to stop the gray and black markets. Gorbachev, however, has found in the gray and black markets an impetus for reform. As a result, many formerly illegal economic activities are now encouraged. Car owners can officially use their vehicles as taxis, for instance, and mechanics can go into business for themselves. The government recognizes that many of these activities actually benefit the country. The government also hopes to earn money from taxing the profits of these businesses. The government still limits the size of private businesses, and other restrictions on such economic activity are being worked out. However, these reforms give us some sense of the difficult balancing act the Soviet government must sustain—introducing private enterprise with out destroying a socialist economy.

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMICS

OBJECTIVES:
All countries must plan according to the limitations and advantages of their natural resources and geography. This is particularly true in the Soviet Union. Although it is a rich and varied land, its size alone creates many problems for agricultural and industrial development. Lack of water is also a perennial difficulty for Soviet production, as is the weather itself. This activity will introduce students to the geographical obstacles with which the Soviets must contend.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:
- Read and discuss "The Problem of Geography" with students.
- Have students research the locations of the main rivers in the Soviet Union. Have them explore the nature of the regions in which these rivers flow. Ask them to determine the factors that prevent some of these regions from being used for agriculture or industry.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- How does the geography of your region influence your way of life? How does it affect industry and transportation?
- Research the drought that affected the United States in the spring and summer of 1988. How did this influence the economy? How did it change the way of life for people in the affected regions?

4 / ACTIVITY TWO

READING:
THE PROBLEM OF GEOGRAPHY

The Soviet Union is the largest country in the world, covering one-sixth of the earth's land surface. The country is so large that it contains eleven time zones—when it is noon at one end of the USSR, it is 11 p.m. at the other. Given its size, it is not surprising to find great geographical and climatic diversity in the country. The country ranges from frozen tundra to grassland to great mountains to deserts; average winter temperatures range from 43° F to -58° F; average summer temperatures run from 86° F to 32° F; annual rainfall varies from 100 inches in some regions to less than 2 inches in others.

Soviet coal, petroleum, and natural gas reserves are among the largest in the world.

Such diversity is also reflected in the natural resources of the country. For instance, its coal, petroleum, and natural gas reserves are among the largest in the world. The Soviet Union has large stores of copper, gold, manganese, and other minerals, and its reserves of iron alone account for about 40% of the world's total. In addition, the country contains about one-fourth of all the forest land in the world. Many of these resources are located in Siberia and other regions far away from most of the population, and this fact creates many problems. It is difficult to develop these resources, for most people do not want to live in these distant lands. To get people to relocate, very high wages are offered. In addition, constructing houses and cities in these frozen lands is very expensive. As a consequence, even when enough workers can be brought to these lands, the cost of the goods they produce is high.

Transportation is also a major problem in developing the natural resources of the Soviet Union. The country is so large, and so much of it is underdeveloped, that few paved roads connect East to West. In much of the countryside, only dirt roads can be found. In the spring these dirt roads turn to mud, making them unusable at harvest time. Due to poor transportation, a large percentage of crops spoil before arriving at food processing plants or stores.

Trucks spray water over strip mine to keep down coal dust.

The primary connection between the many regions of the Soviet Union is the railroad system. Because of the vast size of the country, and because of the severe weather experienced in much of the Soviet Union, rail remains the best means of freight and passenger transportation. And yet while the total length of the rail network in the country this century has doubled, the network is still inadequate. Most of the rails are located in the European sector, and to a lesser degree in the middle zone of the country. The largest project in recent years has been the Baikal-Amur Mainline (BAM), running from the Pacific Ocean through Siberia and on to the western part of the country, for a total distance of around 2,000 miles. This single line has helped to tie this distant area more tightly into the Soviet economy, but it has not by any means solved the area's transportation needs.

Water is another huge problem for the Soviets. Of all the water that flows through Soviet rivers each year, only 16% goes to the regions where 85% of the population lives, and where more than 80% of Soviet industrial and agricultural production occurs. In addition, many rivers throughout the country remain frozen during much of the year. This means that there is a limit on how much farming can be done in the USSR, and how much business growth can be sustained. The lands of Central Asia, for example, are fertile and could produce many more crops, but they cannot be developed without more water. In recent years, the Soviets actively worked to irrigate this area by reversing the flow of two rivers that take water north to the Arctic Ocean. This plan was intended to be the largest, most expensive technological project in human history, but it was abandoned in 1986 as unrealistic. Today, the Soviets are trying to conserve water. This is difficult, since the users of water do not pay for it—the government does. One consequence of this careless use of water, and of population growth in general, is that the ecologies of some Soviet lakes and internal seas are now threatened by low water levels.

All countries have to plan their economies around the natural resources available to them, and they must discover how to turn the geographical characteristics of their land to their advantage. As we have seen, geography is a particularly important factor in Soviet planning, and the Soviets have still to conquer the many problems their vast and varied country presents to them.

Harvesting wheat on a Moldavian farm.

4 / ACTIVITY THREE

JOB SECURITY IN THE SOVIET UNION

OBJECTIVES:
Up to the present day, there is no unemployment in the Soviet Union. Citizens are assured of jobs no matter what the economic conditions of the moment might be. In this exercise, students will examine the merits of this policy by comparing two short readings.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Readings (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:
■ Using the two readings that follow, lead students in a discussion about guaranteed employment and worker incentive.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Questions for Reading 1

■ According to the author, what are the strengths of Soviet employment policies?

■ What can you conclude about the values of the Soviet people?

■ Soviet employment policies strive to distribute money and goods somewhat equally among citizens. What positive and negative results might come from such policies?

Question for Reading 2

■ According to the author, what are the weaknesses of Soviet employment policies?

Additional Question

■ Have you ever known someone who was unemployed? What effects did unemployment have upon this person? What other effects might unemployment have upon people?

READING ONE:
THE SOVIET VIEWPOINT

GEORGI A. ARBATOV (WITH WILLEM OLTMANS)
EXCERPT; (NEW YORK: DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY, 1983.).

Whenever one compares the living standards of the Soviet Union and Western countries, one should keep in mind that the Soviet people have enjoyed for decades many of those things that still remain hard to obtain for the average Westerner. I mean free education and health care, guaranteed employment, and so on. . . .

There can be deep differences in values [between countries]. Every nation must make its choice and, having made it, should not complain about the consequences. For instance, one choice of ours was to have as complete social and economic security as possible, including guaranteed full employment and such employee's rights as to make it almost impossible to dismiss a worker. Naturally, this couldn't help having some impact on the intensity of work, and thus on general productivity. Then, the fact that all our enterprises are practically bankruptcy-proof is probably reflected in the work of the managers. I'm not going to attribute everything to this, and we do our best, while retaining these benefits, to increase the productivity of labor, to develop better moral and material incentives. But the things I mentioned still do have an impact. People do not have to fight for sheer survival. Is that good or bad? I am sure the overwhelming majority of people in the USSR think it's good. . . .

. . . Communist ideology emphasizes collectivism, which means that there can and should be harmony between individual and collective interests, and the latter being just as natural and necessary for individual freedom and development as the immediate interests of the individual. This, by the way, contrasts with the extreme individualism typical of many Americans.

A Soviet family sits down to breakfast.

READING TWO:

THE FLAWS OF SOVIET EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Workplace discussion on factory policies.

In the Soviet economy there is no competition, no survival of the fittest. If you want to have an efficient economy, you must have competition and incentives. Unfortunately, this means that some people must be motivated with fear and insecurity; but the possibility of getting rich is also a great incentive.

Workers in the Soviet Union know they will always have a job. They are secure in their positions. But people need the fear of unemployment—and the fear of having no money—to motivate them to work hard. Business managers in the Soviet Union also know they will not be fired, and that their firms will not go bankrupt. But for an economy to work well, bosses need to fear the collapse of their businesses; they need to work to satisfy customers.

Such employment policy is possible only because enterprises do not compete with each other in the Soviet Union. There is no pressure for businesses to be more efficient. Product developers know that the consumer has no choice, so they can tell a consumer to "take it or leave it." In addition, since the government keeps prices low by subsidizing important products, the incentive for business efficiency is further reduced. Businesses will not make a profit regardless of how well they manage production.

In short, while job security can be beneficial, the Soviet Union is damaged by too much job security and the lack of competition that results.

THE ISSUE OF INEQUALITY: WAGES AND PRIVILEGES

OBJECTIVES:
Advocates of communism stress that communism means economic equality, among other things. Yet there remains significant inequality in communist countries. Some of these inequalities are acknowledged publicly, and some even have the support of the people—for instance, citizens in the Soviet Union generally support the higher wages received by government and industry leaders. However, there are many inequalities of which Soviet citizens do *not* approve. Recently, in newspapers such as *Pravda*, Soviet citizens have complained about the special treatment party officials and other elites receive.

In this activity, students will examine the wage and privilege structure of the Soviet Union, as described by Soviet dissident Roy Medvedev.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:
■ Roy Medvedev has long been considered one of the most important dissidents in the Soviet Union. Medvedev was a member of the Communist Party, but he was expelled in 1969 after he published a letter in Germany criticizing Stalin. Recent developments have made it more difficult to call Medvedev a dissident, for the Soviet press has interviewed him and some Soviet officials have publicly agreed with him. This reading was taken from *On Socialist Democracy*, a book Medvedev wrote to stimulate discussion of socialism and democracy among Soviet citizens, although the book, given Medvedev's dissident status, was published only in the West.

Medvedev's book was published in the mid-1970s. At that time, Leonid Brezhnev was the leader of the USSR. There have been important changes since then. Through the succession of leaders that followed Brezhnev, and particularly with present leader Mikhail Gorbachev, reform of the Soviet system is underway. Leaders have focused on corruption, on various inequalities, and on the special privileges accorded high officials, and so there has been some recognition of the problems Medvedev describes.

■ Medvedev makes several points that deserve special attention:

— Medvedev does not propose lowering the high wages of officials. Rather, he argues that equality should be achieved by raising the lower salaries of others. Notice, however, that he proposes determining the correct level of wages scientifically. In Medvedev's other writings, he has suggested that a single government bureau determine these correct wage levels for all employees. Medvedev does *not* believe that wages should be determined by a free market.

— Medvedev suggests that wage inequalities be corrected gradually over a number of years. He recognizes that many people rely upon the existing system and its complicated forms of privilege. Changing the system will cause turmoil among the elite, and so these powerful people must agree to go along.

— Medvedev distinguishes between salary inequalities and special "secret" privileges. He approves of higher salaries in some cases, but does not approve of secret privileges. Regarding this point, it is important to understand that Soviet citizens often have sufficient money. They do not, however, have enough desirable things to buy. Many things that everyone would love to buy are sold only in special stores open to the elite. Thus, raising the lower salaries of citizens without providing access to buy is not a desirable reform.

■ Remind the class of the decisions they made in the opening activities of the curriculum. Review with students the ways they decided income and relative worth, and relate those understandings to this reading.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

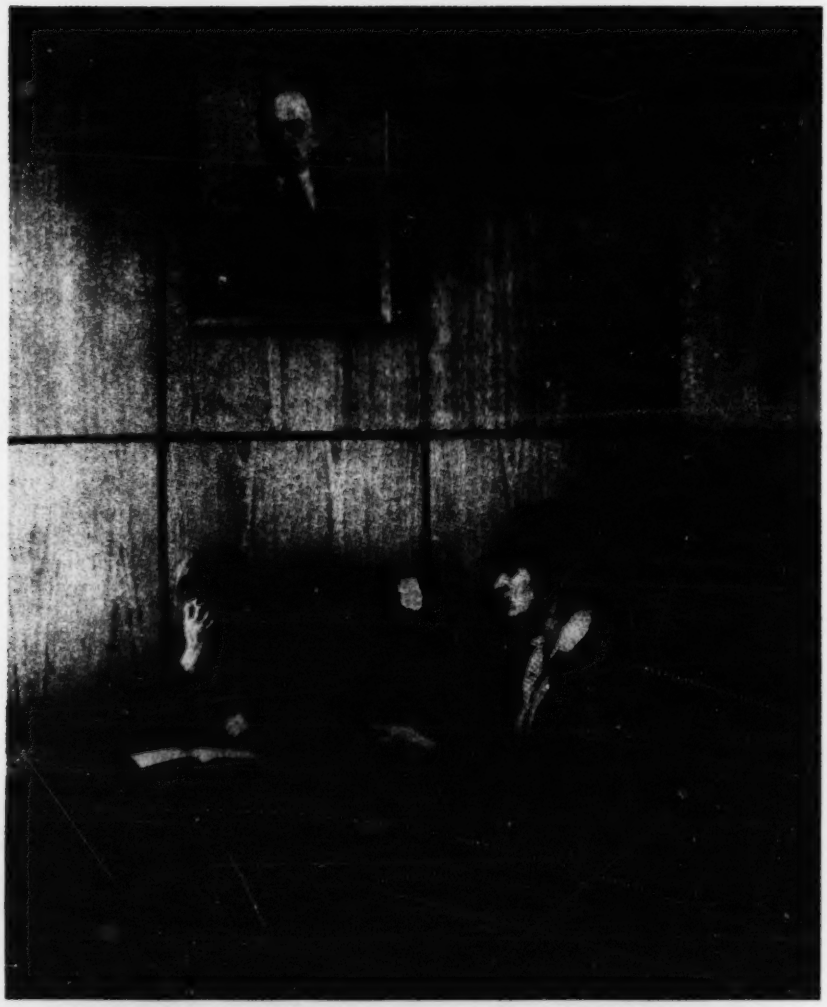
■ Why would a Soviet leader want to reduce inequalities? Generally speaking, what might be the effects of inequalities?

■ If you were the leader of the Soviet Union, and you had to reduce the privileges of the elite, but at the same time you had to depend upon the elite to help you run the country, how would you convince them to go along with your plan?

■ Have you ever had a job where you thought you were paid too little? Too much? What factors do you think determined your pay? What do you think should be considered when setting wage levels? What role should the government play? The employer? The employee?

■ What do we believe in the United States about the equality or inequality between people's incomes? According to the principles of our economy, what best motivates workers?

■ The Constitution, particularly the Bill of Rights, describes political rights and equality, but not economic matters. The creation of income equality is left to the tax system, where wealthy people are taxed at a higher rate than poor people. In recent years, many have criticized government regulation of the economy, and government regulation of both corporate and individual incomes. What role should our government play in the economy?



Party official listening to worker's request for a larger apartment.

READING:
ON SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY

ROY MEDVEDEV
EXCERPT; (NEW YORK: ALFRED KNOPF, 1975).

. . . During the first months of Soviet rule the salary of a People's Commissar (including Lenin himself) was only twice the minimum subsistence wage for an ordinary citizen. . . . Over the next years, Lenin made sure that the ratio between lowest and highest salaries in state organizations was never greater than 1:5.

. . . One can only speculate about what might have been if Lenin had continued to lead the country. Stalin, of course, particularly from the beginning of the thirties, was responsible for the fact that many of the basic principles of a socialist wage policy went by the board. The nominal pay of ordinary factory and office workers rose very slowly, which meant that millions of people earned wages or received pensions considerably below subsistence level (for the most part no longer even calculated in Stalin's time). Yet the salaries of senior party and state officials kept rising. The party maximum was done away with. Senior officials earned not two to five times but rather ten to twenty times as much as factory and office workers. At the same time the secret system of "packets" was gradually introduced—large monthly bonuses handed over to most so-called *nomenklatura* officials [those holding elite jobs], usually amounting to more than the regular salary for the particular post.

As for the top leadership—Stalin and the other members of the Politburo—no distinction was made between their personal expenses and needs of the state, and so in practice there was virtually no limit. It scarcely needs saying that this system was in flagrant contradiction of genuine socialist principles.

During the last twenty years the system of determining wage levels has been radically altered. Rates of pay for factory and office workers at the bottom of the scale have been substantially increased; the minimum wage and the minimum pension have more than doubled. At the other extreme, the practice of handing out "packets" has been condemned and abolished, considerably reducing the real earnings of high officials. There is, however, still a great deal to be criticized in the salary structure of the country. Teachers, doctors, certain other white collar workers, and members of the intelligentsia are all underpaid. . . . Even today the ratio between highest and lowest rates of pay remains remote from the ideals of socialism. . . . In the larger institutes of the Academy of Sciences, the ratio between the salary of a laboratory assistant or a junior research worker with no degree and that of an academician in charge of a department is 1:15 or 1:20. In Soviet ministries and important military establishments, the ratio between the highest and lowest rates of pay is also 1:20 or even 1:30, but if one takes into consideration the many services available to *nomenklatura* officials at public expense (food coupons, medical treatment, holidays, personal transport, dachas, etc.), the total value translated into monetary terms would make the ratio 1:50 or sometimes even 1:100. Obviously this is quite excessive for a socialist country.

. . . Aside from wage differentials, there is the question of special privilege, the fact that leading government officials have unique access to a variety of scarce goods and services. The original approach to this question, as everyone knows, was that there

should be no special privileges for any members of the government. The first leaders of the socialist revolution were absolutely sincere about this; it was a natural reaction to the blatant injustice of the old order and at the same time certainly did attract the admiration of the masses as they rose up in revolt.

Memoirs about Lenin recall how on the day after the victorious uprising in Petrograd, he simply went by tram to rest in the apartment of one of his comrades. When he visited the Kremlin barber, Lenin insisted on waiting his turn and sat quietly reading a newspaper. . . . When Lenin moved into the Kremlin he occupied a small room which had belonged to one of the former servants. In *State and Revolution* he expressed the view that the leaders of the new state should not have their expenses paid out of public funds.

This absolute insistence on refusing almost all privilege was typical of the majority of the leading figures of that time. Such an uncompromising approach was taken for granted by the first generation of revolutionaries . . . [but today we realize that] it is in the interest of a socialist society that its leaders have everything they need, since the prosperity and well-being of the whole people depend on the quality of their work. . . . They are, in fact, representatives of the nation, and this function requires additional expense. . . .

There is the danger, however, that this whole system of special privilege can become self-serving and change from a means into an end. . . . When privileges are granted from above in the absence of public supervision, it is much easier for them to become excessive, leading to secret prerogatives and the abuse of high office.

During the Stalin period, *nomenklatura* officials . . . had access to a very extensive range of privileges. Special "elite" apartment houses were constructed for them, along with exclusive dachas and sanatoria, none of which were available to ordinary factory and office workers. There was a system of "closed" clinics and hospitals, and restricted shops where it was possible to buy foodstuffs and consumer goods otherwise in short supply.

Unfortunately many of these privileges still exist today [in the 1970s] for a large number of officials. There is also a disturbing trend toward special advantages in access to higher education—sometimes more than half of the nominally available places are reserved even before the examinations take place.

Quite obviously, most of these privileges could be abolished without harming society in any way or affecting the work of *nomenklatura* officials except possibly for the better. The most natural way to ensure certain benefits for leading officials is to pay them more; this is a much healthier method than the creation of restricted stores and other special institutions for their use alone.

In his essay "Progress, Coexistence, and Intellectual Freedom," written in 1968, Academician Sakharov says,

> *I would like to emphasize that I am not against the socialist principle of payment based on the amount and quality of a person's work. The payment of high salaries to proficient administrators and highly skilled workers, teachers and doctors, workers in dangerous occupations, scientists and scholars, people engaged in the arts . . . does not threaten society as long as it is not accompanied by concealed privileges. Higher wages, if properly earned, benefit society as a whole. After all, every minute wasted by a top administrator represents material loss for the economy, and every minute wasted by an artist or composer means that society loses that much emotional, philosophical or artistic capital. . . . But when it is a question of secrecy, there is inevitably a suspicion that something wrong is going on.*

4 / ACTIVITY FIVE

THE PROBLEM OF UNEARNED INCOME

OBJECTIVES:
The following is taken from an article that appeared in the government newspaper, *Izvestia*. It is based upon a discussion by several Soviet experts—a professor of law, a steelworker, a sociologist and an economist. The issue being discussed is the problem of "unearned income"—money made in "unofficial" ways. The article includes concrete examples of the problem as well as a discussion of remedies.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:
■ Discuss the following reading with students.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
■ Here are some examples of work that provides "unearned income" to Soviet citizens:
— Truck drivers who haul for money on official hours, using state trucks and gas.
— Doctors who see patients for money, after hours, using state supplies.
— Construction workers who steal materials from state jobs and sell them.
— Store clerks who stash good cuts of meat and sell them to preferred customers for much higher prices, keeping the difference between the official price and the higher price.
— Car owners who use their cars as unofficial taxis.
— People who buy jeans from Westerners and sell them for huge profits.
— Laborers who get bonuses even though their production is lower than the quota.

■ Why are the authorities concerned about this illegal income?

■ How do the Soviet definitions of earned and unearned income differ from ours?

■ What do you think about government taxes on individual or business income? What are taxes for? What do you think about the government having information about people's incomes?

READING:
"UNEARNED INCOME: DEBATING HOW TO FIGHT IT"

EXCERPT: *IZVESTIA*, 7 JULY 1985. REPRINTED IN *THE CURRENT DIGEST OF THE SOVIET PRESS*, XXXVII, NO. 27 (31 JULY 1985).

Let's begin with the bonus.

If a plant's annual plan has been adjusted—downward, of course—and this less demanding plan has been fulfilled, the plant receives a bonus. It is not a bit smaller than would be provided for the original, more challenging plan.

Here is an even more absurd fact. It seems that there are instructions that establish the maximum figures for enterprises' nonfulfillment of contractual commitments. . . . If a contract goes unfulfilled by less than the established maximum . . . but is unfulfilled nevertheless, the employees receive bonuses. . . . [In other words, if the plan calls for a bicycle factory to produce a hundred bicycles, with a "nonfulfillment" figure of 3 bicycles, and the factory makes 98 bicycles, the workers still get a bonus.]

Even by the most primitive logic, those who fail to fulfill delivery plans should be penalized. But they are given bonuses. . . .

From undeserved bonuses—there is a long list of them—let's move on to unearned wages. Here the degree of absurdity is even higher. I'm referring, for instance, to payment of absenteeism—or, to put it more simply, absence from work. The reasons for such absences can be varied, and the motives are not always bad. For example, you are sent to a state farm that is sponsored by your enterprise to dig potatoes. All this time you continue to receive . . . your salary. . . . But your work is being done by others, or no one is doing it. Meanwhile, on the state farm you receive what you have actually earned there [That is, the worker earns two salaries.] . . . By the most modest estimates, every year an average of up to 1.4 million people are absent from their jobs solely because of sponsorship work. The annual total of their earnings while absent is close to 3 billion rubles. . . .

. . . But the economic and moral consequences of this disorder [of unearned income] are by no means abstract. . . .

[Today many people] have provided themselves with their own well-built homes and furnished them with expensive imported furniture. Such a person has bought crystal, carpets and gold ornaments. Under his house, he has a garage in which the newest model of Zhiguli [car] sits. At one time, he was practically a regular theatergoer. . . . He was seen at the openings of all the prestigious plays. . . .

What income does this person have that enables him to live such an openly luxurious life? . . .

There are many possibilities, as the saying goes. Perhaps he is earning "under-the-table" income with his Zhiguli. Maybe he's a "go-between" at the flower market. Or perhaps he lends money for its "growth potential," collecting interest—some people do that, too. . . .

Unearned income and income earned from speculation, money obtained outside the economy's public sector, are beginning to lead people astray from the collective field of the socialist farm. . . . A very distinctive type of employee is evolving, one who merely serves his allotted time in the "field" but "puts his heart," as the saying goes, into his "vegetable garden". . . .

The participants in the debate were inclined to think that many types of off-the-books individual activity have become

Even by the most primitive logic, those who fail to fulfill delivery plans should be penalized. But they are given bonuses.

quite lucrative in our day. Such activity is not always unlawful, strictly speaking. Often it takes place "on the fire line" between lawfulness and unlawfulness. But in all instances, it is uncontrolled.

Moonlighters who contract to make repairs in apartments, private motorists who compete with taxi drivers, suburban homeowners who rent rooms to summer vacationers—it's difficult to list them all. But none of them are subject to any form of control over their income.

Control—this word united all of our conversational partners, and then separated them. The need for control itself drew no argument. The argument was over specific ways of exercising this control. The economist insisted on broad control from below, control by workers, and on fuller use of the Law on Labor Collectives for these purposes. But when a specific measure was proposed—let a person who buys an expensive item (one costing more than 1,000 rubles) secure the consent of his collective, which best knows what sort of income the buyer is living on—this idea met with some very strong objections.

A proposal for changing the tax system was just as hotly debated. Everyone seemed to agree that the current tax system is outdated. The taxes now in effect perform only one function—they are a source of financial revenue for the state budget. However, under socialism they also have the objective purpose of being a means for the purposeful regulation and redistribution of personal income and private property.

It was proposed that the income tax on wages and salaries and the tax on childless couples be replaced by a single progressive tax on all income, not just the income a family receives in the national economy. We need an effective, continuously operating system of state and public control over sources of income, the sociologist said. If necessary, let the citizen give the appropriate controlling agencies a report-declaration accounting for all the property in his possession and all his sources of current income. The controlling agencies should have the right to verify the correctness of these reports and make estimates of the value of an individual's private property and to decide whether it is in keeping with his earned income. . . .

S. S. Shatalin raised the question of a comprehensive, systemic approach to the problem. Needless to say, he said, economic evil must be fought above all by economic measures and by improvements in the entire system of economic relations in our society. The path is known: the resolute improvement of the entire economic mechanism and of the entire system of management, and the creation of economic—precisely economic—preconditions that would make payment for labor truly payment according to one's labor.

Speaking to a meeting of the Leningrad Province Party organization's *aktiv*, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev said: "Questions of the observance of moral norms are becoming acute, comrades. This is right and proper. We should have one discipline for everyone, one law for everyone and the same requirements for everyone, and, most important, the well-being of each and every person should be strictly dependent on his labor contribution and on the quantity and quality of his labor. People are so indignant at instances of unearned income that they are calling for the drafting of a relevant legislative document."

Those who saw this speech on television remember the applause with which the audience responded to these words.

4 / ACTIVITY SIX

THE DIFFICULTIES OF REFORM

OBJECTIVES:
Reform of any economic system creates confusion and difficulty for citizens as they adjust to change. This is particularly true today in the Soviet Union as the country reacts to the changes of *perestroika*. This internal restructuring of the Soviet economy has shaken up ways of living the Soviets have long been accustomed to. This activity offers students a hint of the turmoil caused by these reforms.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Readings (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURES:
■ Read and discuss the following transcripts of two recent news reports on changes in the Soviet economy.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
■ Judging from these stories, why are people getting laid off in the Soviet Union now?

■ Soviet leaders say that people will be retrained, and other jobs will be made available. People will not wind up idle on the streets. Still, many workers are afraid, and the leaders themselves don't really know how these changes will work out.

If you were the Soviet leader, aware of the fundamental values that have influenced the country over the years, how would you explain to the population the need for economic changes that may result in unemployment?

■ The reports offered in television news are very brief. What are other things you would like to know about unemployment and change in the Soviet Union that these stories do not tell you? Where could you find the answers to your questions? What conclusions do you draw from the television reports you have read here?

READING ONE:

Tom Brokaw, NBC anchorperson:

Ironically, it is Mikhail Gorbachev's attempt to reform the Soviet economy that is now the major cause of unemployment in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev wants to cut through the layers of inefficiency and bureaucracy that have held down the Soviet economy. To double the national income by the year 2000, for example, means that 16 to 18 million people will lose their jobs. And they may not get satisfying new ones.

NBC's Garrick Utley explains how thousands have already been affected.

General Secretary and President Mikhail Gorbachev discusses his economic programs with workers.

Garrick Utley
[the video shows a railroad]:

This is the railyard in Minsk, the center of the Belorussian regional railroad system. With 100,000 workers, it was grossly overmanned. So 12,000 workers were laid off. Their pay was added to the wages of those who kept their jobs to improve incentives and performance. It was a radical change in a country where job security has been taken for granted.

Valentin Lepov kept his job.

Valentin Lepov (Soviet worker):

Before it didn't matter how someone worked—good or bad—because people were needed. But now if someone works badly he won't get paid well or he can get fired.

Garrick Utley:

What happened in the rail system is being used as a model for other industries —drastic layoffs, downsizing. The problem is that the Soviet system does not allow for unemployment. Everyone is guaranteed a job. The size of the task is enormous.

Even the bloated Soviet bureaucracy is being cut. [Video shows offices of a bureaucracy.] This was the Ministry of Technical and Professional Education, but this month it was closed down. The entire ministry. The bureaucrats cleaned out their desks and were out of a job—all of them. They waited in the hallway to see placement counselors about their future.

A laid-off worker continues on full salary for his former employer for a maximum of 3 months; then he or she must take a new job. Since no unemployment is allowed, there is no unemployment insurance. It is a traumatic moment.

READING TWO:

This story appeared on the ABC Evening News on May 26, 1988, the eve of the Moscow summit.

Peter Jennings (anchorperson):

In the Supreme Soviet, which is the highest parliamentary body in the land, several members objected to a new law, which would have had the effect of stifling the private business cooperatives that Mr. Gorbachev thinks are so essential. The bill was changed. Some people think the private cooperatives are getting out of hand. Others believe they must exist to ignite enthusiasm in a stagnant economy.

John Lawrence [ABC reporter, speaking as viewers see fashion models on stage]:

The fashionable new face of free enterprise is showing itself off all over the Soviet Union. Profit-making cooperatives, like the dressmakers who held this fashion show in Alma-Alta (Kazakhastan), 2,000 miles from Moscow, are springing up by the thousands. And the public seems to like them. So do the workers. They earn up to twice as much as employees in state-owned companies. 400,000 people now work in private cooperatives. But elsewhere *perestroika* isn't working.

Soviet Worker:

Things are not going too well for us. We just started a new process of changing things. It really is a very delicate period for us.

John Lawrence:

Just how delicate can be seen here in Tashkent. [Here are] Casual laborers, many of them unemployed, waiting for work. Unemployment is forbidden by communist doctrine. The hiring of workers for day labor is against the law. In Tbilisi (Georgia), a state-run store is out of food and customers, while a coop on the same street is filled with food and shoppers. The quality of many state-made products is so poor they cannot be sold. So the primary purpose of *perestroika*—a dramatic increase in the Soviet standard of living—isn't happening.

Soviet Official:

At the moment economic reforms haven't led to the improvements of living standards of working people in our country. Some workers are working harder and earning more than in the past. But the majority of workers are worse off.

John Lawrence:

Some workers are disgruntled.

Soviet Worker:

We can see *perestroika* is going badly indeed. Nobody has taken notice of anything.

John Lawrence:

This graduate engineer says *perestroika* hasn't change the bureaucracy where he works.

Soviet Graduate Engineer:

The situation is a catastrophe. The head of the research and development department is like a piece of wood. If we have such a blockhead in charge of research and development, who is always lying about rules and things, imagine what the results are.

John Lawrence:

For most workers, like Nana Ivonova, the results of *perestroika* are limited. [Videotape of Mrs. Ivanova working at an abacus] Her bookkeeper's salary is now up to the national average of 300 dollars a month, but her factory cannot afford to get her a computer. Nana's family of four lives in a cramped, one bedroom apartment. Her son sleeps in the kitchen. Not much has changed for them.

Nana:

The best thing about life now is the cooperatives. There is competition with the state shops, and the products in the cooperatives are better.

Soviet high fashion.

John Lawrence:

So are the profits. After two months in business, this dressmaking cooperative in Tbilisi is earning 25,000 dollars a month. [Lawrence turns and questions the attractive, young woman manager of the cooperative.] Do you think you will be a millionaire someday?

Cooperative Manager:

I don't think about it. Not yet.

John Lawrence:

But many workers whose own salaries have not gone up are angry about the sudden success of the coooperatives. This deep-rooted attitude is caused by what some sociologists call—"social passivity."

Their attitude is, 'I don't want anymore than anyone else, but my neighbor shouldn't have more either. There's no need for an excessive income. The person who earns a lot is probably a crook."

Soviet official:

We must get rid of the psychology that proclaims a hard and honest earner a bad man.

John Lawrence:

Perestroika calls on workers once again to throw off their chains, this time for capitalist concepts of the free market. After 70 years of collective working some Soviets see *perestroika* as economic freedom. Others see it as a new contradiction of communism.

Workers in textile factory.

5

THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY —HUMAN RIGHTS

5

THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY —HUMAN RIGHTS

INTRODUCTION

Why do standards of human rights vary from country to country?

The issue of human rights is often raised in discussions about the Soviet Union. It is thought that the Soviet Union habitually violates the rights of its citizens; these violations have greatly affected relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Yet despite the great concern over human rights, many Americans have only a vague understanding of the issues involved. Why do standards of human rights vary from country to country? What standards are important? How universal should these rights be, and how much should they depend upon different social and political contexts, and different definitions of humanness?

It is important to explore with students the many different sides of these issues. What ideal definitions exist? Students will discuss the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" of the United Nations, excerpts from the Constitution of the Soviet Union, and excerpts from the Constitution of the United States. What do we do when real experience does not measure up to these ideals? Students are asked to weigh the relative value of economic versus political rights, and they are asked to discuss the tension between individual freedom and social control. Students will also examine dissent within the Soviet Union, and the immigration and emigration policies of both the United States and the USSR.

Throughout this chapter, the issues of human rights are presented as complicated problems. This approach may create a certain amount of discomfort, for many people feel that any effort to consider seriously

Soviet perspectives creates too much sympathy for Soviet actions. However, the purpose of this curriculum is not to excuse obvious human rights violations in the Soviet Union or any other country; the study of Soviet motives need not lead to acceptance of Soviet actions. But by communicating to students the complexity of human rights issues, by helping students examine the historical and socio-political context of these issues, and by encouraging them to think critically, teachers will give students skills useful in examining human rights issues in many different countries and circumstances.

GENERALIZATIONS FOR THE TEACHER

■ There is a set of universal human rights defined by the United Nations, but individual countries also establish their own definitions of human rights. Some countries place greater emphasis upon individual rights, and some consider collective rights more important. Some countries emphasize political rights, and some stress economic rights.

■ The issues of human rights often reveal the tension between individual freedom and society's need for order and control. Laws sometimes protect the individual within society, and at times *limit* the rights of individuals.

■ In the Soviet Union, the Communist Party generally decides when it is appropriate to limit individual rights. Usually, the interests of society are given priority over the interests of individuals. However, a small group of dissidents in the Soviet Union have worked to strengthen the laws that protect individual political rights, and today, the Soviet leadership itself is trying to reform the legal system to give greater protection to individuals.

DEFINING HUMAN RIGHTS

OBJECTIVE:
In this exercise, students will explore the United Nations' "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," and compare their own views with the ideas expressed in this document.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:
■ Discuss with students their understanding of "human rights." List with students examples of human rights on the board. Ask students to prioritize these rights.

■ Discuss the U.N.'s "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and compare and contrast the rights named by the class with those listed in the Declaration.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
■ Compare the class list with the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights. How are the lists similar? Different? Ask students about each right named in the U.N. Declaration. Do they believe this right is a universal human right? Why or why not? Which of the rights named in the Declaration are considered to be universal by our country? Which are not?

■ Which of the rights mentioned in the Declaration do students think are the most important? Have students select the five they think are most important, and poll the students (each student votes five times).

■ Ask the students to think about how their own understanding of human rights might be affected by their religious or social background. Ask them to chose a right they feel strongly about, and write an essay explaining their reasons for believing in this right. Students might also interview a number of people and write an essay outlining what they discovered in their interviews.

■ It is sometimes argued that abuses of individual human rights might, at times, have to be tolerated for the benefit of the entire society—for instance, keeping order may be perceived to be a society's greatest need, and thus the repression of protest may be necessary. Can you think of recent examples in world history where this argument might apply? What are some

It is something argued that abuses of individual human rights might, at times, have to be tolerated for the benefit of the entire society.

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examples of this in the history of our own country? Are there any situations in which abuses of human rights, like freedom of speech or right of due process, could be tolerated by you? Why might a country at war revoke certain rights temporarily? What do you think about countries doing this?

■ What individual human rights come into conflict with each other? What should society do when this happens?

READING:
UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

UNITED NATIONS

Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter affirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, therefore, the General Assembly proclaims

This Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8. Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10. Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11. (1) Everyone charged with a penal offense has the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offense on any account of any act or omission that did not constitute a penal offense, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time when the penal offense was committed.

Article 12. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, or to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14. (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from nonpolitical crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15. (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16. (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitations due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unity of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17. (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, workshop and observance.

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinions and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21. (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22. Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23. (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protections against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25. (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26. (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27. (1) Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28. Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29. (1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognitions and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any rights to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

5/ACTIVITY TWO

HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

OBJECTIVES:

In this activity, students are asked to discuss selections from the Constitution of the Soviet Union, and compare them to selections from the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights. This comparison may reflect favorably on the Soviet Union for, *on paper,* the Soviet Constitution defines as many rights as does the U.S. Constitution. In fact, the Soviet Constitution may seem even *more* comprehensive than ours. Your students may be surprised to learn that the Soviet Union professes to follow such a liberal constitution, for this constitution contradicts all of our assumptions about life there. In reality, some experts say that the Soviet Constitution plays almost no role in governing the country. Certainly, there is a great disparity between reality and ideals in the Soviet Union, for repression has frequently been used to obtain political goals, and the Soviet Constitution is ignored frequently by the Soviet government.

Obviously, discussions of human rights must go far beyond intentions and appearances. Even in our own society, people must sometimes struggle to bring a society up to its ideals, as the civil rights movement and the feminist movement have demonstrated. Students must be told of Soviet failings, but it is also important that the principles of Soviet government are not rejected out of hand as mere fantasy. First of all (as of this writing), the Soviets seem to have recognized their inadequate attention to their own constitutional rights; they seem to be working to give individuals greater freedom. Secondly, students can learn more about the role of context in any consideration of human rights by examining the specific ways the Soviets interpret their constitutional guidelines. In this activity, students will become familiar with the guidelines professed by the Soviets; subsequent activities will address their application.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Readings (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:

■ Ask students to read excerpts from the Soviet Constitution and have them list on the board the rights mentioned in this document. Ask students to read the excerpts from the Constitution of the United States. Have them list on the board the rights mentioned here. Ask the students to compare and contrast

the two documents. Students could do this in two groups, with each group becoming an expert in one of the two documents.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ How many rights mentioned in the Soviet Constitution were discussed in Activity #1? Are there any rights discussed in Activity #1 that are not listed in the U.S. Constitution?

■ How many rights mentioned in the U.S. Constitution were discussed in Activity #1? Are there any rights discussed in Activity #1 that are not listed in the Soviet Constitution?

■ How do the Soviet and U.S. documents differ? How are they similar?

■ The Soviet Constitution mentions economic rights not covered in the U.S. Constitution. In 1944, Franklin D. Roosevelt did propose an Economic Bill of Rights that guaranteed employment, health care, and so forth, but it was not made into law. Should the United States have an Economic Bill of Rights? Why or why not? If yes, what would you include in an Economic Bill of Rights?

■ What conclusions about a society's priorities and values can you draw by studying a document like a constitution?

■ What questions do you have about the enforcement and/or implementation of the rights listed in both documents?

READING ONE:
THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SOVIET UNION

EXCERPTS

Article 34. Citizens of the USSR are equal before the law, without distinction of origin, social or property status, race or nationality, sex, education, language, attitude to religion, type and nature of occupation, domicile, or other status.

The equal rights of citizens of the USSR are guaranteed in all fields of economic, political, social, and cultural life.

Article 35. Women and men have equal rights in the USSR.

Exercise of these rights is ensured by according women equal access with men to education and vocational and professional training, equal opportunities in employment, remuneration, and promotion, and in social and political, and cultural activity, and by special labor and health protection measures for women; by providing conditions enabling mothers to work; by legal protection, and material and moral support for mothers and children, including paid leaves and other benefits for expectant mothers and mothers, and gradual reduction of working time for mothers with small children.

Article 36. Citizens of the USSR of different races and nationalities have equal rights.

Exercise of these rights is ensured by a policy of all-round development and drawing together of all the nations and nationalities of the USSR, by educating citizens in the spirit of Soviet patriotism and socialist internationalism, and by the possibility to use their native language and the languages of other peoples of the USSR.

Any direct or indirect limitation of the rights of citizens or establishment of direct or indirect privileges on grounds of race or nationality, and any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness, hostility or contempt, are punishable by law. . . .

Article 39. Citizens of the USSR enjoy in full the social, economic, political and personal rights and freedoms proclaimed and guaranteed by the Constitution of the USSR and by Soviet laws. The socialist system ensures enlargement of the rights and freedoms of citizens and continuous improvement of their living standards as social, economic, and cultural development programs are fulfilled.

Enjoyment by citizens of their rights and freedoms must not be to the detriment of the interests of society or the state, or infringe the rights of other citizens.

Article 40. Citizens of the USSR have the right to work (that is, to guaranteed employment and pay in accordance with the quantity and quality of their work, and not below the state-established minimum), including the right to choose their trade or profession, type of job and work in accordance with their inclinations, abilities, training and education, with due account of the needs of society.

This right is ensured by the socialist economic system, steady growth of the productive forces, free vocational and professional training, improvement of skills, training in new trades or professions, and development of the systems of vocational guidance and job placement.

Article 41. Citizens of the USSR have the right to rest and leisure.

This right is ensured by the establishment of a working week not exceeding 41 hours, for workers and other employees, a shorter working day in a number of trades and industries, and shorter hours for night work; by the provision of paid annual holidays, weekly days of rest, extension of the network of cultural, educational and health-building institutions, and the development on a mass scale of sport, physical culture,

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and camping and tourism; by the provision of neighborhood recreational facilities, and of other opportunities for rational use of free time.

The length of collective farmers' working and leisure time is established by their collective farms.

Article 42. Citizens of the USSR have the right to health protection.

This right is ensured by free, qualified medical care provided by state health institutions; by extension of the network of therapeutic and health-building institutions; by the development and improvement of safety and hygiene in industry; by carrying out broad prophylactic measures; by measures to improve the environment; by special care for the health of the rising generation, including prohibition of child labor, excluding the work done by children as part of the school curriculum; and by developing research to prevent and reduce the incidence of disease and ensure citizens a long and active life.

Article 43. Citizens of the USSR have the right to maintenance in old age, in sickness, and in the event of complete or partial disability or loss of the breadwinner.

This right is guaranteed by social insurance of workers and other employees and collective farmers; by allowance for temporary disability; by the provision by the state or by collective farms of retirement pensions, disability pensions, and pensions for the loss of the breadwinner; by providing employment for the partially disabled; by care for the elderly and the disabled; and by other forms of social security.

Article 44. Citizens of the USSR have the right to housing.

This right is ensured by the development and upkeep of state and socially owned housing; by assistance for cooperative and individual house building; by fair distribution, under public control, of the housing that becomes available through fulfillment of the program of building well-appointed dwellings, and by low rents and low charges for utility services. Citizens of the USSR shall take good care of the housing allocated to them.

Article 45. Citizens of the USSR have the right to education.

This right is ensured by free provision of all forms of ecucation, by the institution of universal, compulsory secondary education, and broad development of vocational, specialized secondary, and higher education, in which instruction is oriented toward practical activity and production; by the development of extramural, correspondence and evening courses; by the provision of state scholarships and grants and privileges for students; by the free issue of school textbooks; by the opportunity to attend a school where teaching is in the native language; and by the provision of facilities for self-education.

Article 46. Citizens of the USSR have the right to enjoy cultural benefits.

This right is ensured by broad access to the cultual treasures of their own land and of the world that are preserved in state and other public collections; by the development and fair distribution of cultural and educational institutions throughout the country; by developing television and radio broadcasting and the publishing of books, newspapers and periodicals, and by extending the free library service; and by expanding cultural exchanges with other countries.

Article 47. Citizens of the USSR, in accordance with the aims of building communism, are guaranteed freedom of scientific, technical, and artistic work. This freedom is ensured by broadening scientific research, encouraging invention and innovation, and developing literature and the arts. The state provides the necessary material conditions for this and support for voluntary societies and unions of workers in the arts, and organizes introduction of inventions and innovations in production and other spheres of activity.

The rights of authors, inventors and innovators are protected by the state.

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Article 48. Citizens of the USSR have the right to take part in the management and administration of state and public affairs and in the discussion and adoption of laws and measures of All-Union and local significance.

This right is ensured by the opportunity to vote and to be elected to Soviets of People's Deputies and other elective state bodies, to take part in nationwide discussions and referendums, in people's control, in the work of state bodies, public organizations, and local community groups, and in meetings at places of work or residence.

Article 49. Every citizen of the USSR has the right to submit proposals to state bodies and public organizations for improving their activity, and to criticize shortcomings in their work.

Officials are obliged, within established time-limits, to examine citizens' proposals and requests, to reply to them, and to take appropriate action.

Persecution for criticism is prohibited. Persons guilty of such persecution shall be called to account.

Article 50. In accordance with the interests of the people and in order to strengthen and develop the socialist system, citizens of the USSR are guaranteed freedom of speech, of the press, and of assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations.

Exercise of these political freedoms is ensured by putting public buildings, streets and squares at the disposal of the working people and their organizations, by broad dissemination of information, and by the opportunity to use the press, television, and radio.

Article 51. In accordance with the aims of building communism, citizens of the USSR have the right to associate in public organizations that promote their political activity and initiative and satisfaction of their various interests.

Public organizations are guaranteed conditions for successfully performing the functions defined in their rules.

Article 52. Citizens of the USSR are guaranteed freedom of conscience, that is, the right to profess or not to profess any religion, and to conduct religious worship or atheistic propaganda. Incitement of hostility or hatred on religious grounds is prohibited.

In the USSR, the church is separated from the state, and the school from the church.

Article 53. The family enjoys the protection of the state.

Marriage is based on the free consent of the woman and the man; the spouses are completely equal in their family relations.

The state helps the family by providing and developing a broad system of child-care institutions, by organizing and improving communal services and public catering, by paying grants on the birth of a child, by providing children's allowance and benefits for large families, and other forms of family allowances and assistance.

Article 54. Citizens of the USSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No one may be arrested except by court decision or on the warrant of a procurator.

Article 55. Citizens of the USSR are guaranteed inviolability of the home. No one may, without lawful grounds, enter a home against the will of those residing in it.

Article 56. The privacy of citizens, and of their correspondence, telephone conversations, and telegraphic communications is protected by law.

Article 57. Respect for the individual and protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens are the duty of all state bodies, public organizations, and officials.

Citizens of the USSR have the right to protection by the courts against encroachments on their honor and reputation, life and health, and personal freedom and property.

Article 58. Citizens of the USSR have the right to lodge a complaint against the actions of officials, state bodies and public bodies. Complaints shall be examined according to the procedure and within the time-limit established by law.

Actions by officials that contravene the law or exceed their powers, and infringe the rights of citizens, may be appealed against in a court in the manner prescribed by law.

Citizens of the USSR have the right to compensation for damage resulting from unlawful actions by state organizations and public organizations, or by officials in the performance of their duties.

READING TWO:
AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES PERTAINING TO HUMAN RIGHTS

Article 1. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Article 2. A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

Article 3. No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Article 4. The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Article 5. No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Article 6. In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

Article 7. In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Article 8. Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Article 9. The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Article 10. The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

Article 13. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist in the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Article 14. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law

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which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Article 15. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. . . .

Article 19. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any States on account of sex. . . .

Article 26. The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age. . . .

Throughout U.S. history, citizens have demonstrated for rights not originally guaranteed by the Constitution.

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ECONOMIC VERSUS POLITICAL RIGHTS

OBJECTIVES:
The polilitical rights we take for granted—such as freedom of speech, press and assembly—have not been extended to the average Soviet citizen. For instance, citizens are not allowed to publish articles or books outside of official government publishing channels—that is, individuals cannot publish their views without government approval. One also needs government approval to organize an assembly of people (although illegal protests recently have been tolerated in the USSR with few arrests). Many other freedoms we consider essential are not guaranteed in the Soviet Union, because the rights described in the Soviet Constitution are subject to the whims of the Communist Party. According to the Constitution, Soviet citizens are required to "contribute to the maintenance of public order," and "safeguard the interests of the Soviet state." Such language is used as a license by the government to define individual rights as it wishes. Freedom, by our definition, is very limited in the Soviet Union. Within strictly defined limits, people can do what they want.

As previous readings suggest, the Soviets are said to give priority to collective and economic rights, while the United States emphasizes individual and political rights. It is not commonly accepted in the United States that the government should be responsible for health, housing, and food. Now that Soviet leaders are calling for the radical restructuring of the Soviet economy, economic entitlements are being called into question, and new mixtures of economic and political rights are being tested. The readings in this section will raise questions about the conflict between the individual and the collective, and questions about the relative importance of economic and political rights. These discussions will help students appreciate the complexity of the human rights questions.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Readings (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:
■ Read and discuss the following readings, one by the author, the other by columnist Charles Krauthammer.

It is not commonly accepted in the United States that the government should be responsible for health, housing, and food.

5 / ACTIVITY THREE

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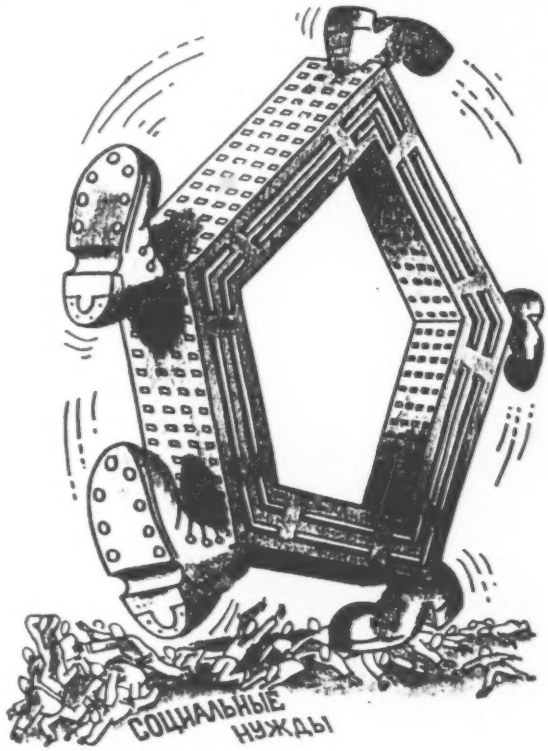
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ What quantity and quality of necessities must be provided before we can say that a people's economic rights have been fulfilled? How do we determine what is adequate?

■ Krauthammer claims that political rights are a "radically different Western idea." If it is true that our definition of human rights is very foreign to the Soviet Union, how should we approach discussions of human rights with the Soviets?

■ Krauthammer uses an analogy of a jail to say that what the Soviets provide in terms of economics are not really "rights." How fair an analogy do you think this is?

■ How much do you think that the United States should emphasize economic rights? What are some commonly cited examples of economic injustice in the United States? How would *you* define economic injustice? Do these examples fit your definition? How would you correct this? How much would you be willing to sacrifice your political rights to correct these injustices?



***Crocodile* (1987). Social Needs**

READING ONE:
PRIORITY OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS

Unlike the capitalist countries, the Soviet Union gives great priority to economic rights. The Soviets believe that the human rights most often discussed in the West—rights such as freedom of speech and assembly—are not nearly so important as the right to health care and a job. According to the Soviets, most people do not want to write books or participate in protests; most people are instead concerned about housing and health care, and so these economic necessities are placed before political rights. Without economic security, political rights are seen as irrelevant.

The following passage, from the Soviet official Georgi Arbatov, states the Soviet position well.

"At the time of the Revolution in Russia, social rights and freedoms were of prime importance for people who were hungry and lived in conditions of abject poverty, and for the illiterate peasants constituting the majority of the population. These were the right to work, the freedom from hunger and starvation, the right to have a shelter, the right to have land to till, the right to be educated, the right to receive medical care and so on.... These and many other social rights still occupy the highest places in the set of values of our society.[1]

1. Georgi Arbatov (with Willem Oltmans), *The Soviet Viewpoint* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1983): 145.

Without economic security, political rights are seen as irrelevant.

Health care in the Soviet Union is free. 70% of the doctors are women.

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READING TWO:
"A HUMAN RIGHTS SUCCESS"

CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER
EXCERPT; *WASHINGTON POST*, 3 JUNE 1988.

[During the Reagan-Gorbachev summit in 1988] [T]he worst nonsense came from earnest attempts by the American press to explain ... why the Soviet regime still insists on keeping some people in jail for their political beliefs and preventing others from emigrating for no discernible reason at all.

It turns out that the apparent absence of liberty in the Soviet Union is really a definitional problem. The West believes in what are called "negative" rights—i.e., protecting individuals against government action, such as censorship or arrest without warrant. The Soviets believe in "positive" rights—i.e., government guarantees to individuals of certain positive goods, such as housing, food and health care.

It is an old idea that communism (or fascism) is a kind of bargain: you give up some rights in order to get others. You give up a free press and get a chicken in your basket. Trouble is, communism never delivered the chicken. (It costs $22 today in a place where the average weekly wage is $50.) The only class of Soviet citizen that is guaranteed material sufficiency is the elite. In the Soviet Union, health care and good education and housing and food are rationed by class, exactly as they are in the West.

And in the USSR, far less efficiently. Under Brezhnev, the Soviet Union was the only country in the developed world (unless you count Romania) in which infant mortality rose and life expectancy declined. Housing is so scarce that couples must live for decades with their parents before getting their own flat. And the rationing is so bad that sugar was almost unobtainable in much of the Soviet Union until the summit.... Communism, in sum, deprives its citizens not just of liberty, but of material goods too. Which is exactly why Gorbachev is so desperate for radical restructuring of his system.

But even if it were true that communism provides more material goods in exchange for liberties, this transaction is not an exchange of "rights." Consider a jail. Prisoners are guaranteed housing, food and other necessities of life. We don't then say that prisoners have traded certain rights (liberty) for others. We say that prisoners have forfeited their rights. What the warden provides are necessities, not an alternative class of rights.

When we make demands of the Soviets about human rights, we are not trying to stretch a previously existing Soviet definition. We are trying—no use pretending otherwise—to impose a radically different Western idea.

THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

OBJECTIVES:

The Soviets believe that when communism is fully achieved, it will be the highest and most moral form of society. Given that the creation of this perfect communist society is considered such a difficult task, the Soviets have argued that it may be necessary to institute repressive measures in the short term to achieve this society. They argue that some individual rights must be withheld for greater social ends.

In this activity, students will read a summary of several socialist and communist views on the role of the dictatorship of the proletariat. According to the political encyclopedia *Marxism, Communism, and Western Society,*[1] the dictatorship of the proletariat is a dictatorship of the revolutionary working class majority over the former ruling class minority. In the past, Marxist and communist thinkers felt that a small group of wealthy bankers and industrialists controlled society. Their wealth gave these people great influence over the way society was governed. This wealthy class could make certain that rules favored property owners and kept workers at a disadvantage. For workers to end their exploitation, these political theorists thought that workers would have to take over the society. By taking power from the wealthy, workers could dictate how society would run in the future.

Yet, even after the workers did get control of Soviet society, Lenin and other leaders feared that the defeated capitalists would fight back to regain their power. In order to keep this from happening, it was felt that workers—led by the Communist Party—might have to resort to violence—temporarily—to maintain the new order. Since the former capitalist minority was highly educated and skilled, and thus potentially powerful, the oppression of this highly educated minority was deemed justifiable. This oppression was considered in the interests of the majority which had themselves been oppressed for so long.

Today these powerful capitalists are gone from the Soviet Union. But the government of the Soviet Union has been formed by this belief in the dictatorship of the proletariat, and this strategy informs Soviet justifications of human rights violations. It is important for students to study this subject if they are to fully understand these Soviet arguments for internal repression.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

By taking power from the wealthy, workers could dictate how society would run in the future.

5 / ACTIVITY FOUR

PROCEDURE:

■ Read and discuss the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" with students.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ What kinds of individual behavior can a government justifiably regulate? How far do you think the government should be allowed to go in such regulation?

■ What examples can you give of laws in the United States that are enforced for the common good (such as taxation)? What responsibility do those who are better off have for contributing to the common good? Should such contribution be voluntary? Regulated by law? If the latter, how far do you think such laws should go?

Soviet poster, 1920. "Comrade Lenin sweeps the globe clean."

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READING:
"THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT"

Long before the Soviet Revolution, Karl Marx wrote about the difficulties the working class would face *after* a revolution:

"Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*."[1] Marx thought that the transitional period would be a short one.

After the Soviet Revolution, V.I. Lenin elaborated Marx's concept more fully. He wrote: "It would be extremely stupid and absurdly utopian to assume that the transition from capitalism to socialism is possible without coercion and without dictatorship."

"The only form of rule which has the support of the working people . . . is Soviet rule, the dictatorship of the proletariat. This dictatorship presupposes the ruthlessly severe, swift and resolute use of force to crush the resistance of the exploiters, the capitalists, landowners and their underlings. Whoever does not understand this is not a revolutionary. . . ."[2]

Lenin felt that a strong central party could impose this dictatorship for the proletariat; in fact, he claimed that the Soviet government was "nothing but an organizational form of the dictatorship of the proleta riat." But Lenin too thought that this dictatorship would be short-lived, and that the role of the government would quickly shift from repression to administration.

This strategy of government was not without its critics within socialism. Rosa Luxembourg is one example. In her book *The Russian Revolution*, she warned of the dangers of this philosophy:

"But with . . . repression . . . life in the soviets must also become more and more crippled. Without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public institution, becomes a mere semblance of life, in which only the bureaucracy remains as the active element. . . . [I]n reality only a dozen outstanding heads do the leading and an elite of the working class is invited from time to time to meetings where they are to applaud the speeches of the leaders, and to approve proposed resolutions unanimously . . . a dictatorship, to be sure—not the dictatorship of the proletariat, however, but only the dictatorship of a handful of politicians. . . ."[3]

In 1936, under the rule of Josef Stalin, the Soviet Constitution was changed. The Soviet Union was no longer defined as a dictatorship of the proletariat, but instead as a socialist state that had succeeded "as a result of the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat." But even with an "official" end to the period of the dictatorship, control did not revert to the working class. The authority of the Party was well entrenched, with dictatorship the accepted form of government, as Stalin's rule would demonstrate.

1. Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels, *Works*, quoted in C.D. Kernig, ed. *Marxism, Communism, and Western Society* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

2. V.I. Lenin, "Greetings to the Hungarian Workers," quoted in C.D. Kernig, ed. *Marxism, Communism, and Western Society* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

3. Rosa Luxemburg, *The Russian Revolution*, quoted in C.D. Kernig, ed. *Marxism, Communism, and Western Society* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

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5/ACTIVITY FIVE

THE TREATMENT OF DISSIDENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION

Dissidents challenge the system itself, rather than a specific shortcoming of the system.

OBJECTIVES:

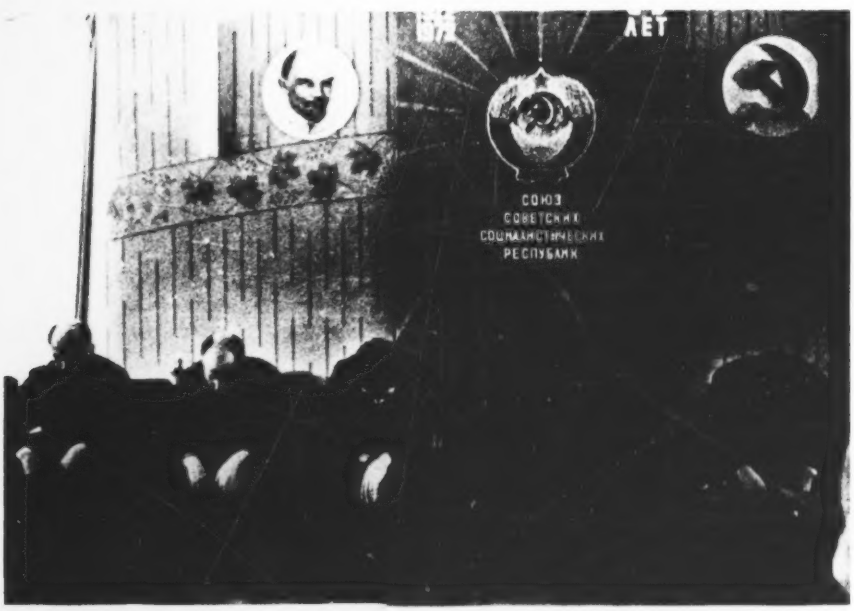
Any discussion of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" raises questions about the relationship between society and the individual, and the relationship between means and ends. It also raises questions about the meaning of human rights. For Americans, the most obvious shortcomings of the Soviet system can be seen in the way dissidents are treated in the Soviet Union. For despite official Soviet statements to the contrary, and despite the existence of documents such as the Soviet Constitution, there are serious human rights violations in the Soviet Union.

In this activity, students will explore the plight of the dissident in Soviet society. The Soviet dissident challenges the government publicly. While average Soviet citizens may question the government, this is usually done through "appropriate" channels—writing to newspapers, complaining to officials, and so forth. Dissidents challenge the system itself, rather than a specific shortcoming of the system. Dissidents operate outside normal channels, although many have begun by trying to work within the system. These dissidents have always been a small minority in the Soviet Union, and many Soviet citizens have not agreed with them. This fact, however, should not prevent us from taking the dissidents seriously.

Under Mikhail Gorbachev, many activities once considered to be dissident are now tolerated. Not only have the Soviets released over 350 political prisoners, but they have ceased to arrest people on the usual political charges. (Only one or two have been arrested under Article 70 or 190-1 of the Criminal Code since 1987, according to Helsinki Watch.) A number of individuals who used to be called dissidents, such as Andrei Sakharov and Roy Medvedev, are now officially included in political discussions by the media. While many activists continue to be harassed and detained, opportunities for political expression are greater now than at any time in recent Soviet history.

The readings on dissidents offered in this activity serve as a summary of the conditions political activists have faced in the past and could face in the future. This first reading is authored by Nicholas Davies, an American official in Moscow. It describes the case of a Soviet official responsible for workman's compensation, whose concern for his clients eventually pushed him outside the system. This official suffered relatively mild consequences for his actions. Other more severe cases have involved imprisonment, or even

institutionalization in psychiatric hospitals. The second reading describes one such case. The author tells of the conditions faced by a well-known Soviet dissident named Yuri Orlov. Orlov was instrumental in setting up Helsinki Watch, a group of Soviet citizens who attempted to monitor their government's compliance with the Helsinki Accords. The Helsinki Accords were signed in 1975 at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. These Accords govern security and human rights in 35 countries, including all European countries, the USSR, the United States, and Canada. The Helsinki Watch group in Moscow publicized human rights violations by the Soviet Union. Imprisoned for some time in a labor camp, Orlov was eventually released by the Soviets in 1986. This article about Orlov was written by John B. Oakes, a former senior editor of *The New York Times* and a member of the American citizens committee to monitor the Helsinki Accords.



Psychiatric hospitals in the Soviet Union are not run the Ministry of Health, but rather by the KGB.

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MATERIALS NEEDED: Readings (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:

■ Have students read and discuss each of the following short pieces. After these discussions are completed, have students research the current state of human rights in the Soviet Union. They may decide to review recent news and magazine articles, or write to various groups who monitor human rights. Students may want to write to Amnesty International, 322 Eighth Avenue, New York, N.Y., 10001 or Helsinki Watch, 36 W. 44th St., Suite 911, New York, N.Y., 10036. There are also offices of Amnesty International in a number of cities throughout the United States.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ How are the following rights handled in the cases described in the readings: right to housing, right to work, right to free speech?

■ Volodya's reaction to injustice was perhaps not unusual, but many other Soviet citizens have not been moved to action in the same way. Why do you think this is so? In the United States, some citizens also perceive injustice but take no direct action. Why do you think this is so?

■ What do you think of Volodya's decision to be more outspoken? What do you think about his opinions of the Soviet system and its dissidents?

■ Should a society protect itself from individuals who might disrupt it? How should it do this? How might individuals protect themselves from the state?

■ Do you think it is ever right to go outside of the law to express political criticism? Can you think of any events where an illegal action against a government for political purposes made sense? Do you think violent action against a government is ever justified? Why or why not?

■ Why do you think the range of allowable channels of protest differs so much from country to country? What kinds of things do you think countries might consider when determining the legality of political protest?

■ Think about your own school. What rules exist concerning political protest? What channels are students allowed to use, and what channels are they not allowed to use? What factors do you think were considered when these rules were made? How do you feel about these rules?

READING ONE:
"ARMIES IN FLIGHT: PORTRAITS FROM A DISSIDENT DIARY"

NICHOLAS DAVIES

EXCERPT; *FOREIGN SERVICE JOURNAL* 58, NO. 4 (APRIL 1981).

Volodya, The Labor Rights Activist

Until a few years ago Volodya was a young man on his way up. A lawyer in training, Volodya was a middle level official in the Russian Ministry for Social Security, where he was responsible for what we would call workman's compensation and job safety. He was also a leader in his mnistry's party organization.

Volodya's future turned less promising when he began to realize that the ministry's policies were intended to protect the interests of the regime more than the workers. Troubled by this discovery, Volodya became more assertive in defending the individual cases that came before him. At party meetings he argued that the Soviet state should do more to live up to its claims to represent workers' interests. Eventually Volodya was expelled from the party and fired from his job.

He lives with his wife and new-born daughter in a one-room communal apartment. They share one toilet and a tiny kitchen with four other families. Under Soviet regulations, Volodya is entitled to a larger apartment, but the Soviet housing authorities seldom allocate better quarters to dissidents. While his wife takes a leave of absence from her job to nurse their baby, Volodya makes ends meet by working as a night watchman. His wages are 60 rubles a month. The average Soviet wage is about 160 rubles a month.

Volodya uses his knowledge of Soviet labor law to provide free legal advice to Soviet workers who are seeking redress from some element of the vast Soviet bureaucracy. Many of those who approach Volodya have come to Moscow from provinces to present—in time-honored Russian fashion—a personal petition to a minister or other senior official. Most of Volodya's visitors hear about him through Moscow's highly developed grapevine. In some instances, however, Volodya knows that lower level officials have directed people to him. . . . In other words, bureaucrats in the government that has condemned Volodya send people to him for legal advice.

Many of Volodya's visitors are poorly educated and most have found themselves in serious conflict with the Soviet system for the first time in their lives. Volodya listens patiently to their sometimes rambling stories, and advises them about the best way to advance their cases. In a country where a city telephone directory may be considered a classified document, access to information is often an individual's best weapon in a struggle with the bureaucracy. Occasionally Volodya attempts to enter court cases on behalf of a visitor. He claims to have won three of the six cases where the Soviet judge has allowed him to make arguments.

Volodya considers himself a Social Democrat. He rejects the bureaucratic insensitivity of Soviet communism and what he sees as the unnecessary harshness of capitalism. Volodya criticizes the human rights movement for elitism because of its inability—or unwillingness—to establish links with the working class, and derides its assumption that the power of publicity can induce the arbitrary Soviet regime to obey its own laws.

In a country where a city telephone directory may be considered a classified document, access to information is often an individual's best weapon in a struggle with the bureaucracy.

READING TWO:
"ORLOV'S CRIME"

JOHN B. OAKES
EXCERPT; *NEW YORK TIMES,* 10 FEBRUARY 1983.

The letter is not out of Kafka's imagination, or Arthur Koestler's. It was written in Moscow on Jan. 8, 1983. It comes from Orlov's wife:

> *Yura's situation is terrible. Yura is completely deprived of correspondence rights. The last two letters from him were dated Oct. 18.*
>
> *At the beginning of December, I sent an inquiry [to the Perm labor camp administration in Siberia where Orlov is imprisoned]: "Inform me of the reason for the absence of letters from my husband Orlov for the month of November." Answer: "The quota of letters for the month of November has been entirely used up." I wrote again: "The letters have not been received by me. Inform me as to what address the letters for November were sent." Answer: "The administration does not give out information concerning the questions submitted." I wrote again: "Why have there been no letters for December?" No answer. I discovered an anonymous letter in my mailbox: "Your husband is located in Perm Prison" [as distinct from the labor camp].*
>
> *Something is going on, but what? I get a feeling of terrible, terrible defenselessness—you can't do anything to help a person who is perishing, who is being annihilated, not allowed to write, deprived of his visits, kept in cold and hunger. The uncertainty is just torture.*
>
> *He was forced to perform unbearably hard labor: knitting metal netting by hand. This work is usually done by machines. They have prepared reprisals against him in spite of his health. The criminal Tatasenko, who has already murdered two people, has threatened Orlov that he would cut off his nose and ears.*
>
> *If there is yet another prison sentence, Yuri will never get out of there. This year will be the most difficult and decisive. The regime is taking a path of increasing brutality. I am at my wit's end; I don't know what to do."*

Who is Orlov? What was his crime?

On Feb. 10, 1977, a half-dozen uniformed agents burst into a Moscow apartment and placed a brilliant 52-year-old research physicist named Yuri F. Orlov under arrest.

Since then [and until 1986 when he came to the United States], Orlov has never been free: 15 months in a Moscow jail awaiting trial; then in a "strict regime" labor camp on the border of Siberia, where he is now nearing the end of his seven-year-term, nearly half of it in special-punishment cells where the routine is even harsher than in the camp. Due for release next year (unless, as now seems likely, his sentence is prolonged [which it was—ed.]), he is still condemned to an *additional* five years in internal exile.

Orlov's alleged crime? "Anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda."

Orlov's real crime? Belief in the word of his own government and the courage to act upon that belief.

When Leonid I. Brezhnev, Gerald R. Ford and the top leaders of 33 other governments signed the Helsinki Final Act on Aug. 1, 1975, they pledged "respect" for human rights. Each signatory guaranteed to its citizens the freedom to monitor its own (and others')

compliance with the human rights provisions of the Helsinki accords. What other meaning could the document have in confirming "the right of the individual to know and act upon his rights and duties" in "the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms"—spelled out as covering "freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief" and expansion of freedom of movement, contacts and information?

From the moment that he organized in Moscow the world's first Helsinki Watch group (the predecessor of others in Eastern and Western Europe and the United States), Orlov was a doomed man. In the nine months between its formation and his arrest, the Moscow Watch committee, of which he was chairman, issued 19 detailed reports on human rights violations in the Soviet Union. Orlov was tried—not for making false allegations but for circulating true ones.

Orlov is not alone. Some 50 of the 75 Helsinki Watch members throughout the Soviet Union are now in jail or exile. The Moscow committee, reduced to three old and ill individuals, is inactive. Virtually the entire Ukrainian contingent is in prison.

The 35 nations that signed the Helsinki Accords are now meeting in Madrid, in a protracted review session that has been going on spasmodically for the past two years. The Soviet Union refuses to recognize that its persecution of the Helsinki Watch monitors is not only a repudiation of its word but a rejection of the entire Helsinki process, which it insists it wants to continue and expand.

Today, on the sixth anniversary of Orlov's arrest, the Soviet Union must somehow realize that, much as it would like to forget him, he and his colleagues are not forgotten by the civilized world.

Yuri Orlov.

5/ACTIVITY SIX

THE KGB ON DISSENT

OBJECTIVES:
The following reading appeared in the *Kommunist*, a magazine published by the Communist Party for its membership. This article, written by a top KGB official, describes how the KGB combats dissent. As of this writing, several practices referred to in the reading have changed. First, many human rights activities that had been halted for being "unlawful" are now allowed. Even when the KGB and other authorities crack down on activists, the state seldom brings criminal charges. Second, authorities now allow pop music to flourish—the Soviet government has even started to promote concerts, and some young people have formed independent rock clubs. Yet it is true that many authorities still believe that popular music is decadent and should not be encouraged. The views of the author still reflect a significant segment of conservative opinion in the Soviet Union, even in the era of *glasnost*.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:
■ Read and discuss "How the KGB Combats Ideological Subversion."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
■ Why do you think that the author would write an article like this for other Communist Party members?

■ How does the KGB appear in this article? Why would the author want to present the KGB in this way?

■ What do you think about what the official says about the United States spying in the Soviet Union? What questions do you have after reading this article? What additional evidence would you like the official to give in support of his claims?

■ How do you think the official wants his readers to view the United States?

■ How does this reading make you feel about the Soviet Union? The Soviet people? The Communist Party? Why?

READING:

"HOW THE K.G.B. COMBATS IDEOLOGICAL SUBVERSION"

S. TSVIGUN,
FIRST VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE U.S.S.R., STATE SECURITY COMMITTEE (K.B.G.)
EXCERPT; *KOMMUNIST*, 14 SEPTEMBER 1981. REPRINTED IN *THE CURRENT DIGEST OF THE SOVIET PRESS*, XXXIII, NO.49 (6 JANUARY 1982).

Lately the imperialist special services, led by those of the United States, have been stepping up subversion and espionage throughout the world. One of their most important tasks is the gathering of various kinds of intelligence about the Soviet Union, including information on the economic, political and moral preparedness of the USSR's peoples to bear the burden of an intensified arms race, and even of a potential thermonuclear war. . . .

The imperialist special services continue to use the channels of cultural and scientific exchange and tourism to send agents into our country for the purpose of establishing illegal contacts with hostile anti-Soviet elements here and inciting them to carry out various provocations. Until recently these services counted on finding, among Soviet citizens hostile to our country, a "leader" or several "leaders" who would embark on a course of active confrontation with the Soviet regime and could enlist other antisocial and anti-Soviet elements in an organized campaign against the socialist system. As a result of actions taken by the State Security Committee [KGB], actions carried out in strict accordance with the law and under the guidance of Party agencies, the antisocial elements have been unable to achieve organizational cohesiveness on an anti-Soviet platform, despite the considerable material and moral support they have received from the West. Their appeals for the revision of our political and ideological principles and institutions have met with angry condemnation from the Soviet public. Their unlawful activities have been halted, and criminal charges have been brought against the most active individuals among them.

Once the imperialist special services and anti-Soviet centers realized that the antisocial elements camouflaged as "defenders of human rights" and "champions of democracy" had been exposed and rendered harmless, they launched a feverish search for new methods of subversion. They have clearly stepped up their efforts to capitalize on matters related to the supply of certain foodstuffs to the population and to certain shortcomings in the organization of medical and consumer services. Lately they have considerably expanded efforts to stir up the desire to emigrate not only among the Jewish, German and Armenian populations but also among believers [Christians], who are urged to leave the USSR for religious reasons. . . . Actions . . . encouraging extremism among certain members of the Catholic clergy have assumed a more obvious anti-Soviet thrust. Reactionary Islamic organizations abroad and ideological subversion centers have stepped up their propaganda, trying to capitalize on events in Iran and around Afghanistan. . . .

New and more sophisticated means are being sought to influence various categories of Soviet young people. . . . Our . . . adversary has succeeded in negatively influencing some young people. For example, this is the light in which one should regard attempts to organize groups of young men

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and women on the basis of an enthusiasm for "pop music" or "the Western way of life", such groups have been associated with hooliganism and other antisocial pranks. Some young people have entered into criminal ties with foreigners. The State Security Committee has combated this sort of ideological sabotage among our youth mainly by taking preventive actions.

Despite the enormous effort that goes into subversive activities against our country, they are doomed to fail because of the Soviet people's indestructible unity, solidarity behind the Communist Party, patriotism, internationalism, and readiness to defend the homeland. However, there are still some individuals who, for various reasons, fall prey to the imperialist intelligence services and ideological subversion centers. Soviet peoples' heightened political vigilance is the best way to thwart these individuals.

Boris Grebenschikov, member of Soviet rock group Aquarium, says, "Russia is a godsend. You need oppression to sing the blues."

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5 / ACTIVITY SEVEN

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

OBJECTIVES:
One of the ways countries maintain order is through control of their borders. Restrictions are placed on who may leave a country—emigrate—or who may enter it—immigrate. The Soviet Union maintains great control over emigration and immigration, but it is by no means the only country with a restricted border. Most nations have rules in place; the United States, for instance, has many restrictions upon immigration, particularly affecting immigrants from Mexico and Central America. The United Nations has stated that freedom of movement across borders, and possession of nationality are human rights, but the United Nations has *not* specifically named immigration and emigration as human rights. In this exercise students are asked to weigh the merits of Soviet and American policies toward those who wish to enter or leave these countries.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Readings (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 or 2 classroom periods (45 minutes each)

PROCEDURE: Read and discuss the following readings with the class.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- To what extent do you think the right to immigrate and emigrate is a human right?
- What do you think about the Soviet government's reasons for controlling emigration? What other reasons might the Soviet Union have?
- What justifications can you think of for not letting an individual leave or enter a country?
- How would you feel if a classmate's family decided to emigrate to the Soviet Union?
- Recently in the United States, there has been much controversy about people who wish to immigrate from Latin American countries for political reasons. Many of these people claim to be the victims of persecution. The United States government has not allowed many of these people to immigrate; in fact, the government has even prosecuted Americans who assist or hide these people (i.e., those who participate in the "sanctuary

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movement"). There is also much controversy surrounding the constant battle between United States Immigration officers and Mexican and Central American citizens who wish to come to the United States to work. These people want to leave depressed economies for a better life in the United States; many Americans worry that these immigrants will have a negative effect on our own economy.

Have students research an issue related to immigration into the United States. Ask students to discuss American policies, and when relevant, to compare these policies to Soviet policies.

■ Public opinion often stands *against* open immigration. This seems to be the case at present in the United States. How should the government react to such public opinion? How should the interests of the United States be balanced with the rights and needs of immigrants? What benefits might a country receive from its immigrants?

■ How should the United States respond to immigrants who wish to come to America because of alleged violations of their human rights in their own countries?

READING ONE:
EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Though the great majority of Soviet citizens have no desire to live elsewhere, every year several thousand Soviet citizens—the vast majority of whom are Jewish and Armenian—apply to leave the Soviet Union. The plight of Jews has been a particularly important issue in U.S.-Soviet relations. There are many reasons why Soviet Jews wish to leave: to join their families in Israel, to practice their religion openly, to leave an environment where anti-semitism is common. During the 1970's, when U.S.-Soviet relations were good, hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews were allowed to leave, but between 1981 and 1986, very few were allowed to go. (In 1987, 8,155 Jews were allowed to leave, along with more than 14,000 Germans. Their numbers continue to rise in 1988, though emigration is still not considered to be a right by the authorities.) Those who are denied permission to leave have suffered great hardship. These "refuseniks" are often not allowed to return to their jobs; they must instead perform menial work. A few are even imprisoned in labor camps or psychiatric hospitals.

In the United States and other countries, many people have taken up the cause of those who wish to leave the Soviet Union. These supporters stage protests and lobby their governments to take action against the Soviet Union. They argue that the Soviet Union's restriction of emigration violates a key human right: freedom of movement—the right to "leave any country, including one's own." (U.N. Declaration of Human Rights). These supporters join with refuseniks in the Soviet Union to document and distribute information about human rights abuses.

The Soviet Union claims that some citizens are not allowed to leave because they would take with them knowledge that would endanger the security of the Soviet Union. The Soviets also say that these applicants cannot ignore their debt to Soviet society. Soviet society has provided free education, and in return these citizens must stay and work. George Arbatov has offered one explanation of the Soviet perspective:

> *"Emigrating from here [the Soviet Union] to the United States is not like leaving, say, Holland for the United States. . . . When somebody leaves this country for the West, it means that he or she rejects the whole set of social values and ideals of the Soviet nation, which were born, developed, and defended through many hardships and ordeals. This also creates certain emotions at the grassroots. The same could be true, to a certain extent, of America. I am sure that a decision to emigrate to a Western European country or Canada would be treated with tolerance. But imagine the reaction of a sheriff from Texas or even an ordinary law-abiding and church-going citizen in a small mid-western town to the news of a neighbor planning to leave for the Soviet Union. . . .*[1]

1.Georgi Arbatov (with Willem Oltmans), *The Soviet Viewpoint* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1983): 146.

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READING TWO:
"IMMIGRATION REFORM II"

EXCERPT; *THE NEW REPUBLIC*, 30 MARCH 1987. (Author not named)

Americans always have been ambivalent about immigration. The central tension is between current residents' fear for the integrity of American "national identity" and their own awareness that every generation in American history has been made up of the descendants of immigrants and new immigrants. Though Americans enjoy the benefits of immigrants' economic energy and low wages, they wince at the exploitation of illegal aliens. Small wonder that, while once we were outraged at the brazen flouting of our immigration laws, now we can't quite stomach the nasty consequences of enforcing them.

How should a nation of immigrants manage immigration? So far, our immigration laws have struck a poor balance. Even though the outright rascism of turn-of-the-century laws has been erased, the law is still riddled with inconsistencies and arbitrary distinctions. Since 1965 there has been a strict limit of 270,000 new immigrants each year. But Congress has created numerous "unrestricted" exceptions for family members, political refugees, and U.S. government employees. As a result, the total number of legal immigrants in 1986 was 601,708, and an equal number probably entered the country illegally.

The 270,000 "restricted" visas go to candidates who fit into one of six "preference categories," which are based on family ties and professional expertise. A limit of 20,000 per country further complicates the picture. Mexico gets only 20,000 even though it supplies at least ten times that number of American residents every year. The categories themselves are based on questionable moral and economic distinctions. Is the nephew of a citizen more worthy of admission than a childhood friend? Do we have a greater need for Indian orthopedists than Chilean arc welders? The Supreme Court's recent decision making it easier to obtain political asylum here gave legal expression to a generous sentiment many Americans feel. But it only heightens the contradictions of our overall immigration policy. Any attempt to gauge the moral claim of a censored Polish filmmaker against that of a starving Haitian peasant is inevitably arbitrary.

For relatives of U.S. citizens, who get 80 percent of all immigrant visas issued, the system works fine. But it has become nearly impossible for those without connections to enter the country legally. There is no room for people who simply want to do what our ancestors did: come to America and try their luck. No wonder so many such "opportunity migrants"—from Mexico, Yugoslavia, India, China, and elsewhere—choose to break the law.

Any attempt to limit immigration involves painful, often arbitrary choices. The best way to blunt these sharp choices is to increase radically the numbers of newcomers we admit. First, both the country limits and the intricate system of preferences should be removed from the system. But most important, the overall ceiling of immigrant visas should be increased from 270,000 to one million per year. Only in this way can America restore the integrity of its laws and its standing as the favored destination of those seeking both political freedom and economic opportunity.

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SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

6
SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Americans are greatly concerned about Soviet foreign policy. Actually, "foreign policy" is a euphemism for our real concerns: we are worried that the Soviet Union wants to overrun the United States and the rest of the world. Samantha Smith expressed such worry in her famous letter to Soviet leader Yuri Andropov, asking him why he wanted to take over the world. Over the last few years, phrases like "the Soviet threat," "the Red menace," and the "evil empire" have been heard with greater and greater frequency. Movies like "Red Dawn" and "Rambo" spoke to our fear of communism, as did the television miniseries "Amerika," a 16-hour epic depicting a Soviet occupation of the United States.

American politicians from across the spectrum speak about the need to counter Soviet expansionism, and so save democracy from the Soviet threat. Similarly, Soviet leaders speak of the threat America poses to their country. In the past, Soviet leaders predicted that communism would one day triumph over capitalism and American imperialism. For decades, foreign and domestic policies in both countries have been influenced by the threat each country poses to the other. As a result, it is important for Americans to ask clearly: How real is the Soviet threat? What, precisely, should we worry about? Is a takeover possible? What are the foreign policy goals of the Soviet Union? Are the Soviets indeed bent on world conquest? How much faith should we put in the images we have of a Soviet takeover?

Of course, it is very difficult to know completely the foreign policy goals of any government. All governments cloak their foreign policies in at least partial secrecy, and this is particularly true of the Soviet Union. Thus the real reasons behind a public action taken by a government are often not apparent. But we should not allow our uncertainties to defeat us. We can, through careful and critical analysis of American and Soviet policies, learn enough to act as informed citizens. If we can achieve a better sense of Soviet foreign policy, and hence of probable Soviet actions, we can also contemplate possible American responses to Soviet actions. Our policies can be prudent rather than reactive, and the danger of war—including nuclear war—will be lessened.

GENERALIZATIONS FOR THE TEACHER

■ Our fear of Soviet takeover of the U.S. is partly based upon Soviet actions in the world. But because it is difficult to understand the Soviet Union fully, our fears are also based on exaggerations and stereotypes.

■ We can obtain a general understanding of the Soviet Union's foreign policy goals. These goals reflect the superpower's desire for extensive influence in the world. The reasons for this desire for influence are many: ideological, economic, political, psychological.

■ These desires inevitably place the Soviet Union into direct and indirect competition with the United States and its interests around the world. There is great danger if this competition is not managed by both sides—armed conflict is always a possibility. But it is possible to control this competition and to avoid war.

■ Strategies of competition need to consider the interdependence of the two systems. Both must compete without expecting the other side to give up its own system.

THINKING ABOUT A SOVIET TAKEOVER

OBJECTIVES:

Although a Soviet occupation is widely feared in the United States, many experts feel that it is impossible, and that such an occupation is not even desired by the Soviet Union. Even in Western Europe, which lies next to the Soviet Union, the chances of Soviet invasion and occupation are considered by many to be extremely slim. The bleakest scenarios foresee not a conventional takeover, but a large scale nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union. Yet, because both countries support opposite sides in conflicts in the Third World, it is possible that American and Soviet troops will fight each other elsewhere in the world. Consequently, thoughts of larger-scale conflict, invasion, and occupation continue to play an active role in the national imaginations of both countries.

Advertisement for a U.S. defense contractor.

6 / ACTIVITY ONE

Fears of a Soviet invasion and takeover have been expressed in films and television programs such as "Red Dawn," "Invasion U.S.A.," and "Amerika." But over the last few years, the Soviets have participated in several summits with the United States, and in 1988, President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev signed an agreement limiting nuclear missiles in Europe. Our anxieties rise and fall as relations between the two superpowers go up and down. We respond with uncertainty to events, to changes in policy, to changes in the personalities of our leaders, and to the whims of the mass media.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:

■ Have students read the following article and then discuss the reading, using the questions below.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ What do you think about the possibility of a Soviet takeover? How do you imagine such a takeover occurring? How do you think the Soviets would behave as leaders?

■ Why do you think the television network made "Amerika"? If you were an executive in the television network, would you have shown this program? Would you have shown "The Day After"? Why or why not? What factors would you have considered before deciding?

■ What do we mean when we say a television show or a film is political? What political ideas does the author think were suggested by the television show?

READING:

"FILM SHOWS U.S. AFTER TAKEOVER,"

SALLY BEDELL SMITH
THE NEW YORK TIMES, 7 OCTOBER 1985.

Early next year ABC is scheduled to begin rolling the cameras for a movie that will show United States-Soviet relations through a potentially controversial prism: life in the United States 10 years after a Soviet takeover of the country.

Titled "Amerika" (with a reversed Cyrillic "r"), the 16-hour mini-series will cost ABC $40 million and form the centerpiece of the network's 1986-87 prime time schedule, according to Brandon Stoddard, president of ABC Motion Pictures. It is the latest in a series of films depicting Soviet domination of this country that began last year with "Red Dawn" and continued recently with "Invasion U.S.A.," starring Chuck Norris.

Informative or Damaging?

As was the case with ABC's 1983 film "The Day After," about the aftermath of nuclear holocaust, the mere mention of "Amerika" is enough to provoke debate long before it reaches the home screen.

"If it is well done it could convey to Americans what life is like in much of the world," said Richard Pipes, professor of history at Harvard University. "Most Americans don't have the foggiest notion of what it is like to live under a totalitarian regime."

But to Stephen F. Cohen, professor of Soviet politics and history at Princeton University, "It will be damaging because it will reinforce the image that the Soviet Union is a pathologically expansionist power with a blueprint for taking over the world, including the United States."

Anticipating this sort of debate, Mr. Stoddard and the film's writer, producer and director, Donald Wrye, described the film and its point of view during a recent interview in New York.

Topeka, Kansas, U.S.S.R.

Mr. Wrye said the purpose of the film is to "make us think about what our values are, and about the responsibilities of being an American." Using domination by the Soviet Union rather than portraying some form of indigenous totalitarianism is simply a dramatic device, according to Mr. Stoddard. "It is a good story that no one has ever seen before," he said, "a good stage to write the themes we are dealing with."

"The device was used," said Mr. Wrye, "although most of the experts whose opinion I was exposed to by my researchers held the opinion that this could not happen."

The program originated last year as a three-hour film called "Topeka, Kansas, USSR," and already some critics said the network conceived it as a response to complaints made to ABC last year by Reed Irvine, chairman of Accuracy in Media, a conservative group that monitors the press, that the telecast of "The Day After" presented an unbalanced view.

ABC Denies Political Interest

Mr. Stoddard said he thought of the film independently. "We aren't trying to please anyone," he said. "We have no political interest in the film."

But Accuracy in Media officials said they may have provided some impetus for the film to be produced. "The message of 'The Day After' was that nothing could be worse than nuclear war so we should accommodate the Soviets," said Bernard Yoh, director of communications for AIM. "Reed Irving complained that ABC should show the other side—what would happen if America sur-

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rendered. If that complaint triggered the program, that's fine."

To supply the framework for the script, a group of seven ABC staff members spent six months researching United States-Soviet relations and the phenomenon of occupations from ancient Rome through World War II. A bibliography of that research, supplied by ABC, lists 58 books, 15 magazine articles, five films, and 18 consultants, contributors and interviewees—a mixed bag of conservative and liberal sources with only a couple of prominent experts on relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Film Focuses on Everyday Life

After the research was completed, the scope of the film was expanded, said Mr. Wrye, because "the subject matter was way beyond our imagination in terms of its depth and importance. We needed an extraordinarily large canvas on which to work."

The producers decided to avoid including information in the film about how the Soviet occupation comes to pass. "I was interested in what everyday life would be like, not how we got there," Mr. Stoddard said.

However, Mr. Wrye had to construct the takeover scenario and follow the progress of the first decade in order to begin the film.

He said that no battles were fought and no bombs dropped in his conception. Rather, a select group of KGB agents managed to disrupt the communications, production and distribution systems in the United States. "Everything was so highly sophisticated and computerized and vulnerable they could disrupt our system," he said. Moreover, there was no resistance to the takeover, according to Mr. Wrye, because "there was no target for resistance, no troops on the beaches."

It Is Similar To Vichy France

Those assumptions have prompted criticism from at least one expert on the Soviet Union. "It is a premise that is an absolute myth, with what sounds like a Communist coup organized by the KGB," said Jerry Hough, a professor of political science at Duke University. "At least they could start with our being defeated by a nuclear war."

In the film itself, according to Mr. Stoddard, "life is gray and drab. No one has had a new car for ten years. You can't get a tomato no matter who you know." Ordinary people feel hopeless; drug and alcohol abuse are rampant.

"In a sense everyone is a collaborator," said Mr. Wrye. "It is similar to Vichy France in the first two years of Nazi occupation. There is a willingness to trade one's previously perceived principles for one's narrowly perceived self-interest."

K.G.B. Colonel Sympathetic

The decade since the occupation has brought a balkanizing of the United States into several tightly guarded administrative areas, each with its own money and pseudo-government. A powerless President sits in the White House, which, Mr. Stoddard said, has become "like a Disneyland attraction."

The drama of the film sounds vaguely "V," NBC's science fiction series of last season, only instead of lizards disguised as humans, the villains are K.G.B. operatives. The story focuses on three characters: the K.G.B. leader, a politician who collaborates and a resistance leader.

Despite the deprivation and totalitarianism imposed on the country in his film, Mr. Wrye said it is likely to cause people to have a more moderate view of the Soviet Union, in part because the K.G.B. colonel is portrayed not as a villain but as an intelligent, sympathetic person. He is "a character who loved America and is disappointed by the conflict between the America he imagined and the America that gave up spiritually," Mr. Wrye said.

"I think the Soviets will think they come off better than they expect to or maybe deserve," said Mr. Wrye.

6 / ACTIVITY TWO

SOVIET INFLUENCE AROUND THE WORLD

OBJECTIVES:

No matter what agreements are negotiated between the superpowers, we can expect the Soviet Union to maintain its influence upon world affairs. (Americans, of course, will also insist upon equal participation.) Status as a superpower means many things to the Soviets. The country will work to maintain a strong military force and will try to influence the affairs of countries around the world. The Soviets will also feel compelled to do what they can to reduce the power of any rivals on the world stage.

But the Soviets are more cautious when contemplating military force than we think they are. For the most part, the Soviets have committed their forces to battle only after attempts at diplomacy had failed or when victory appeared easily achieved. Since World War II, Soviet troops have been used in four major conflicts: in Hungary during 1956, in Czechoslovakia in 1968, at the border of China in 1969, and in Afghanistan in 1979. In each case, the fight took place near the Soviet border, and concerned territory the Soviets had previously controlled and would not give up.

As one expert on Soviet military policy has said, "Soviet use of military force must . . . be seen in perspective. Compared with American, British, and French forces, the Soviet armed forces have engaged in little combat since 1945 and have been used less actively as an instrument of policy."[1] But it must also be said that the Soviets use other means to sustain their influence. For example, Cuban troops or military advisors have been sent to Angola, Ethiopia, and Central America. This military assistance was related to Cuban interests, but no doubt the Soviets encouraged and supported Cuban intervention.

In this activity students are asked to explore the nature and extent of Soviet influence worldwide.

MATERIALS NEEDED: List, map, and reading (all included)

TIME REQUIRED: 2 or 3 classroom periods (45 minutes each)

PROCEDURE:

■ In this activity, students will research Soviet involvement in different regions of the world. Students should be provided with copies of the list of nations included in this activity. Besides naming all existing countries, this list reveals which of these countries are strongly influenced by the Soviet Union.

Students should research the nature and extent of this influence. In which countries are Soviet troops stationed? Which countries receive arms? Which receive only economic or humanitarian aid? Teachers may want to assign specific countries to individual students or groups of students. Since geopolitical influence changes from year to year, teachers should encourage students to find the most recent reports on these countries. Students should also be asked to identify possible reasons behind the aid each country receives from the Soviet Union. How strategically located is the country? How interested are the Soviets in opening up that country for purposes of trade? Students may also discover that the status of several countries has changed. Have any countries become more independent of the Soviet Union? Have some become more involved? What reasons lie behind these changes of status?

■ Teachers should point out that many countries that have had ties to the Soviet Union in the past have now separated themselves from this influence. This is the case with, for instance, China, Yugoslavia, Albania, Grenada, Somalia, Persia, Azerbaijan, Austria, Finland, Ghana, Mali, Guinea, and Egypt.[2]

■ Teachers may also want students to research the extent of American influence globally or in a particularly important region. Students should be asked to compare Soviet and American influence and the motives behind each.

■ Along with this research, have students examine the map of the Soviet Union. Discuss with them the geographical circumstances that might influence Soviet foreign policies. The teacher may ask students to research how the location of the Soviet Union influences American strategic policy (i.e., where do American military bases lie in relation to the Soviet Union?)

■ Teachers may want to divide the class into groups, making each group responsible for a report on a single region.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ What conflicting reports about Soviet influence in a given region or country did you discover? What were the disagreements between the reports?

■ What areas seem to be of key importance to the Soviet Union? How important are these areas to the United States?

■ Consider how large the Soviet Union is, and how much territory the Soviets must defend. What countries border the Soviet Union? How close is the Soviet

Union to the United States? Which neighbors of the Soviet Union are friendly? Which are not?

■ In what ways do the Soviets seek to influence other governments? List these on the board. What might be the effects of each kind of influence? Which, if any, of these influences should the United States counteract? In what ways might these influences be counteracted?

■ Why might powerful nations try to seek influence over other countries? What kind of guidelines might be set up to govern the behavior of superpowers?

■ What should a powerful country do when another superpower violates the rules of acceptable behavior? Think of an example in which a country acted aggressively against another country. Which countries found this action acceptable? Which did not? How did the nations who found this action unacceptable respond?

Soviet Influence Among the Nations of the World

This list contains the names of all the countries in the world represented in the United Nations in 1987. Countries with an important relationship with the Soviet Union are in bold type. These relationships take different forms; some countries receive Soviet financial and military assistance, some

Surface-to-air missiles are displayed in Red Square during annual parade commemorating the Bolshevik Revolution. Banners on building proclaim support for Gorbachev's reforms.

countries share the ideology of the Soviet Union, some countries are under direct control. In some countries, the influence of the Soviet Union is being contested, in others it is assured. Even in countries clearly aligned with the Soviet Union, the degree of independence varies from government to government.

Try to find out as much information as possible about the nature and extent of Soviet influence in each country.

AFGHANISTAN
ALBANIA
ALGERIA
ANGOLA
ANGUILLA
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
ARGENTINA
AUSTRALIA
AUSTRIA
BAHAMAS
BAHRAIN
BANGLADESH
BARBADOS
BELGIUM
BELIZE
BENIN
BERMUDA
BHUTAN
BOLIVIA
BOTSWANA
BRAZIL
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
BULGARIA
BURKINA FASO
BURMA
BURUNDI
CAMEROON
CANADA
CAPE VERDE
CAYMAN ISLANDS
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
CHAD
CHILE
CHINA
COLOMBIA
COMOROS
CONGO
COSTA RICA
CUBA
CYPRUS
CZECHOSLOVAKIA
DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA
DEMOCRATIC YEMEN
DENMARK
DJIBOUTI
DOMINICA
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
ECUADOR
EGYPT
EL SALVADOR
EQUATORIAL GUINEA
ETHIOPIA
FIJI
FINLAND
FRANCE
GABON
GAMBIA
GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (EAST)
GERMANY, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF (WEST)
GHANA
GREECE
GRENADA
GUATEMALA
GUINEA
GUINEA-BISSAU
GUYANA
HAITI
HONDURAS
HUNGARY
ICELAND
INDIA
INDONESIA
IRAN
IRAQ
IRELAND
ISRAEL
ITALY
IVORY COAST
JAMAICA
JAPAN
JORDAN
KENYA
KUWAIT
LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
LEBANON
LESOTHO
LIBERIA
LIBYA
LUXEMBOURG
MADAGASCAR
MALAWI
MALAYSIA
MALDIVES
MALI
MALTA
MAURITANIA
MAURITIUS
MEXICO
MONGOLIA
MOROCCO
MOZAMBIQUE
NEPAL
NETHERLANDS
NEW ZEALAND
NICARAGUA
NIGER
NIGERIA
NORWAY
OMAN
PAKISTAN
PANAMA
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
PARAGUAY
PERU
PHILIPPINES
PITAIRN
POLAND
PORTUGAL
QATAR
ROMANIA
RWANDA
ST. KITTS AND NEVIS
ST. LUCIA
ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES
SAMOA
SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE
SAUDI ARABIA
SENEGAL
SEYCHELLES
SIERRA LEONE
SINGAPORE
SOLOMON ISLANDS
SOMALIA
SOUTH AFRICA
SPAIN
SRI LANKA
SUDAN
SURINAM
SWAZILAND
SWEDEN
SWITZERLAND
SYRIA
THAILAND
TOGO
TONGA
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
TUNISIA
TURKEY
UGANDA
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
UNITED KINGDOM
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
URUGUAY
VANUATU
VENEZUELA
VIETNAM
YEMEN
YUGOSLAVIA
ZAIRE
ZAMBIA
ZIMBABWE

READING:
SOVIET INFLUENCE BY REGION

This reading will describe briefly the Soviets' relationship within major regions around the globe. As this reading will show, Soviet influence is varied, depending on such factors as geographical location, the history of the region, Soviet aims, and the goals of each country.

Eastern Europe

Eastern Europe is where the Soviets have greatest influence. Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Poland are commonly called Soviet satellites, or Soviet bloc countries. These countries along with the Soviet Union make up the Warsaw Pact, a military alliance established in the 1950s in response to the creation of NATO by the West. Yugoslavia and Albania call themselves communist or socialist countries, but both have broken away from the Soviet bloc and are considered as Eastern European countries. Albania is in fact openly hostile to the Soviet Union, while Yugoslavia treats the USSR with caution. Yugoslavia maintains significant relationships with both the West and the Soviet Union.

The countries of Eastern Europe were placed under communist control in the late 1940s, after World War II. The Soviet army pushed the Nazis out of these countries at great cost to Soviet lives. The Soviets then stayed on, setting up new governments and helping local communist parties to take over each government, even when these parties were not supported by the majority of the population. This is why many people in the United States and Europe claim that Communist governments are illegitimate. The Soviets, however, consider their control of this region to be a just reward for defeating Germany. To this day, each government is run by the Communist Party of that nation. (For instance, Czechoslovakia is run by Czechoslovakian Communist Party leaders.)

Since these areas were brought under communist control, there have been revolutions attempted in several of the countries. Because political groups outside the communist parties have not been allowed to participate in elections, these groups have hoped to force the party to broaden representation. Uprisings occurred in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Poland in 1980. The Soviet Union has successfully resisted these challenges to their authority. Military force was used to varying degrees in all three cases. In the case of Poland, order was restored through the Polish Communist Party and armed forces rather than through direct Soviet intervention.

Soviet tanks in Prague following 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia.

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After 1968, the Soviet Union defined what is commonly referred to as the Brezhnev Doctrine. This Doctrine states that the Soviet Union will not allow the overthrow of any socialist government in Eastern Europe; the Soviets will use whatever means necessary, including force, to keep these countries within its sphere of influence. However, in 1988 Mikhail Gorbachev, on a trip to Yugoslavia, suggested that this Doctrine no longer applied, and that the Soviets intend to reject the use of force in future relations with Eastern Europe. Western experts have applauded this possible change, but it remains to be seen whether the Soviets will tolerate radical change in Eastern Europe. The Eastern European countries remain vital to the Soviet Union for several reasons. Eastern Europe provides a buffer zone that protects the Soviet Union from attack, and the Soviets depend upon the resources and products these countries provide. The Soviets also have great need for these countries as markets for Soviet goods.

As the rise of Solidarity in Poland illustrates, people in East European countries will continue to contest Soviet control. For a host of reasons—historical, political, and religious—relations between the Soviet Union and its satellites will be marked by conflict; however, if Gorbachev's reforms succeed, new cooperative agreements will also be forged.

China

Relations between China and the Soviet Union are also extremely important. China shares a 4,000 mile border with the Soviet Union, and although it has been run by a communist party, relations between the two countries have been hostile for many years. These countries have fought border wars with one another, and both countries have nuclear weapons aimed at the other. To make matters worse (from a Soviet perspective), the Chinese are ahead of the Soviets, and they have pulled ahead by bringing their economy closer to the Western capitalist model. Thus the Soviet Union is deeply concerned about China. If this country becomes an economic power, China could grow more influential than the Soviet Union, and greatly challenge Soviet interests in many regions. Since 1986 the Soviets have worked to improve relations with China, and both countries say that relations are getting better. However, there is still much tension, and China remains a troubling neighbor.

Western Europe

In recent decades, the Soviet Union has recognized that Western Europe has no interest in becoming communist. The communist parties of Western Europe grow less and less popular, and commitments by Western European countries to capitalism have increased. Even if these countries change their relationships to the United States, the Soviets realize that Western Europe will remain outside Soviet influence. However, the Soviets remain concerned about the military threat these countries could pose if a leader like Hitler ever took power again—the memory of World War II, and the German threat to the Soviet Union, is still vivid. The Soviets will do whatever they consider necessary to preserve their system against possible threat from Western Europe. Politically, this means that the Soviets will work to be included in discussions of Europe's international issues. Militarily, the Soviet Union has worked to equal or surpass the military power of these countries—in recent years, the Soviets have developed military forces that could theoretically defeat NATO in a war. Most recently, the Soviets have pursued arms negotiations and reductions, helping to diminish tensions in Europe.

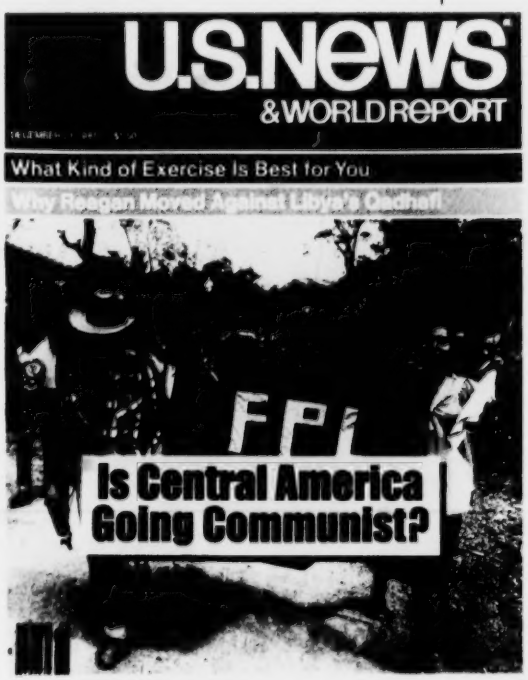
The Soviets also work to sustain good trade relationships with European countries. Most of these countries are technologically ahead of the Soviet Union, and the Soviets wish to obtain these technologies, along with goods and services. Unlike the United States, these nations have not exercised trade embargoes and other political sanctions against the Soviet Union—Western European countries have in fact been reliable trading partners.

The Third World

"The Third World" generally refers to the countries of the Southern Hemisphere that are not industrially advanced. In the Third World, competition between the U.S. and the Soviet Union is most apparent. Most of the wars being fought today are taking place in the Third World; most of these conflicts are civil wars in which the Soviet Union and the United States frequently choose opposing sides. The superpowers have been drawn into conflicts in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Africa, Namibia, Iraq-Iran, Vietnam-Cambodia, and of course, Afghanistan. The superpowers are most concerned with Third World countries that lie closest to their borders. Afghanistan, for example, lies on the southern border of the Soviet Union. The proximity of Nicaragua and El Salvador to the United States raises American interest in the conflicts in these countries. In Third World countries further from the superpowers' borders, other reasons for involvement are apparent. Both countries worry that a Third World country will grow sympathetic to the other side, and so each country tries to expand its role, hoping to counteract the influence of the other. In fact, the potential involvement of one superpower is often considered justification for the involvement of the other.

Many Third World countries also have natural resources that both countries are interested in obtaining, or at least, are interested in keeping from the other. In some cases, a country's location is strategically important. South Yemen, for instance, is a small country, but it lies upon a narrow strait through which all ships entering or exiting the Red Sea must pass. These ships carry oil from Saudi Arabia to the West and Japan, and thus both the United States and the Soviet Union are interested in South Yemen. (Currently the country is more sympathetic to the Soviet Union.) On the whole, however, the Soviets have been unsuccessful in the Third World. Third World countries now undergoing industrialization, such as India and Korea, find the Soviet Union an unattractive model. These countries seem more interested in patterning themselves after the capitalist countries of the West. Soviet influence has generally been restricted to the poorer Third World countries that request military assistance.

The roots of upheaval in various Third World countries can also be traced to long-standing local economic and political conditions that are unrelated to Soviet influence. If the real status of the Soviet Union in these countries is to be understood, these local conditions must also be explored.



The Middle East

Although the Middle East is considered to be part of the Third World, several Middle Eastern countries are wealthy and industrialized, thanks to their oil resources. The Middle East is close to both Europe and Asia, and the region has great economic and religious importance to the West; thus the fate of the Middle East is watched very, very closely. Soviet influence is not great in this region, for the Judeo-Christian heritage of some Middle Eastern countries brings these countries closer to the West. In earlier times, many of these countries were British or French colonies. In addition, many of Israel's Jewish citizens are reminded of the persecution of Jews within the Soviet Union. Millions of Muslim people of the Middle East can also recall an antagonistic history with Orthodox Russia; these Muslims are resentful of the official atheism of the Soviet Union, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan made them even more distrustful. For many reasons then, people in this region are actually *anti*-Soviet and the Soviet Union, in turn, views the region—particularly Israel—with antagonism. There are also economic reasons behind the alignment of this region with the West. The countries of Europe and Japan depend upon oil from the Middle East, while the Soviet Union, the world's greatest oil producer, does not need Middle Eastern oil.

The Soviets once exerted influence in Egypt, but they were expelled from that strategically important country in 1970. Today the Soviet Union has significant influence only in Syria and Libya. The Soviets also affect the region through their support of the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization). Their relative lack of influence in the Middle East is a major concern for the Soviet Union, particularly in light of the extensive role of the United States in the region.

Millions of Muslim people of the Middle East are resentful of the official atheism of the Soviet Union, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Muslim refugees from Afghanistan.

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SOVIET JUSTIFICATION FOR THEIR FOREIGN POLICY

OBJECTIVES:
This activity will explore some of the ways the Soviet Union explains its military and political involvements throughout the world. The first reading in this activity describes the Soviet understanding of communism itself, and how this view provides the Soviets with ideological justification for their foreign policy. The second reading, an excerpt from an article by Lt. Colonel Tyrus Cobb of the United States Military Academy, explores the way that American military activity might be interpreted by the Soviet Union, and in particular describes how this military activity threatens the Soviet Union.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Readings (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1-2 classroom periods (45 minutes each)

PROCEDURE:
■ Have students read the following essays and discuss the questions below.

■ Teachers may want to have students choose a country or countries in which Soviet influence is an issue. Have students research the history of foreign involvement in that country as far back as possible. Students may also want to conduct the same kind of research on a country in which American involvement is an issue.

■ Students may want to research and compare the military expenditures of both the Soviet Union and the United States, and the respective forces of each country.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
■ In the first article, the ideological justification for Soviet policy is discussed, and in the second article, Soviet policy is seen against American involvement in the world. How persuasive is the justification for Soviet policy in each of the two articles?

READING ONE:
AN INTERPRETATION OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

In the early 1960's, President John Kennedy held a summit meeting with Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. Kennedy recognized that the Soviet Union wanted to create as many allies as possible, and Khrushchev understood that the United States equally desired allies for itself. Both leaders also recognized that many countries in the developing Third World would be looking to either country for help. Kennedy told Khrushchev that the United States wanted the Soviet Union to stay out of these Third World countries, and Khrushchev "had told President Kennedy that the Americans could not expect the Soviet Union to sit, so to speak, with its arms folded."[1] Khrushchev was pointing out to Kennedy that—like the United States—the Soviet Union would take advantage of any situation it could.

The Soviets would say that it is the ideas and practices of communism that attract people who are miserable in capitalist societies.

This story represents the standard American analysis of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union: the Soviets will do what is necessary to install communist governments in vulnerable areas. The Soviets, however, would say that it is the ideas and practices of communism that attract people who are miserable in capitalist societies. The Soviet Union may then act to help those who wish to make their countries become communist.

According to Lenin, and other Marxist and communist thinkers, history follows certain laws. One of these "laws of history" claims that capitalism inevitably requires the exploitation of the world's workers. These exploited people will eventually tire of their oppression and will eventually revolt against capitalists and their system. The workers will then replace capitalism with an economic system that does not exploit workers—a socialist or communist system based upon equality and the elimination of private property. The Soviets believe that communism will ultimately spread across the globe as the revolt against capitalism expands. The Soviet Communist Revolution will thus be complete only when a worldwide system embraces all countries.

In other words, when the Soviet Union was founded, its leaders saw themselves starting a revolutionary process that would spread around the world. It was intended that the Russian Revolution would serve as a model for subsequent revolutions in Europe and other countries. As the "leading" communist country, therefore, the Soviets feel thay have a particularly significant role to play in the hoped-for worldwide transition to communism. As this point of view was recently described:

> *The communist conception of revolution itself starts out from the premise that socialist revolution is the result of the inner contradictions of capitalism (such as the conflict between exploiters and the exploited) and not that it is something introduced from the outside.* [That is, capitalism itself creates the conflicts that lead to socialism; the Soviet Union does not start these conflicts.] *On the other hand, the Soviet state always regarded itself as the bulwark* [chief support] *of the international Communist movement. . . . From the first days of its existence . . .* [the Soviet state] *declared that it would help people struggling against colonial oppression and racial-national discrimination.*[2]

Throughout history the leaders of the Soviet Union have felt justified in helping people involved in revolutionary struggles. They

believe this involvement in the affairs of other countries merely pushes history in the direction in which it is already headed. Today, however, Soviet leaders are trying to reduce the costs of supporting communists in the Third World. The Soviets are leaving Afghanistan and pressing for an end to conflicts in Angola and Cambodia. The Soviets are not interested in getting involved in new Third World revolutions.

1. Adam Ulam, *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1985.
2. Excerpted from N. Sivachev and N. Yakovlev, *Russia and the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).

READING TWO:
"THE FUTURE OF THE SOVIET DEFENSE BURDEN"

TYRUS W. COBB

EXCERPT; *NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW* (JULY - AUGUST 1981).

The "Threat"—Soviet Perceptions of the Military Balance

While the West has been concerned with the Soviet military buildup over the past decade . . . the military balance of power probably appears much more threatening to a politico-military planner in the Soviet defense hierarchy. It is instructive to look at this "threat" as it might be perceived in Moscow. . . .

Soviet writers express concern with the postwar rise in American military power and the rapidity with which the United States abandoned its former isolationist policy. They assert that the United States "ruptured" the wartime ties that had been established with the U.S.S.R. and adopted a militaristic policy aimed at "containing" the Soviet Union. American security interests, they argue, required the construction of an extraordinary system of alliances surrounding the U.S.S.R., the maintenance of several large bases far from its own shores, the deployment of a force capable of projecting military power to distant areas, and the actual employment of armed force in a number of instances (Korea, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic).

Soviet observers emphasize that despite "rhetoric" to the contrary, the American defense budget has never been higher. Compared to *announced* Soviet planned expenditures for the same year, 17.2 billion rubles ($23 billion), the Pentagon spent some $126 billion for fiscal year 1979 and plans more in the future. One Soviet newspaper recently commented that "There has never been such a swift growth in military subsidies, not even during the escalation of the U.S. Indochina adventure. . . ."

U.S. involvement overseas continues to grow. American strength abroad is now more than 500,000, a figure that represents about 25 percent of the total forces. The majority of these troops (313,000) are in Europe deployed against the "Soviet threat." Commentators in Moscow are quick to note that the Soviet Union "has not set up a single military base since it entered the world's oceans," but U.S. and British bases "cover in a dense net almost all of the seas and oceans." The United States has major troop units located in Western Europe, Greece, Turkey, Korea, Japan, and in other locales along the periphery of the U.S.S.R. According to the State Department, the United States is presently engaged in no less than eight "collective defense arrangements" with 42 other countries, all oriented against the Soviet Union.

The armed forces of America's allies are also included in Soviet threat calculations. The United Kingdom and France (the latter only politically allied with the United States) both have modest nuclear strike forces, and France maintains a sizable army. The activities of the West German *Bundeswehr* engender especially high levels of concern in Moscow. . . . [O]ne cannot deny that the armed forces of the country that has twice invaded the USSR in this century arouse genuine security concerns in Moscow.

On the Eastern flank the Soviets face a numerically significant conventional threat in their former partner in the international communist movement, the People's Repub-

lic of China. China, the only major power with whom the Soviets have been engaged in actual combat since World War II, fields a force nearly as large as that of the USSR—3,900,000 soldiers of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Given the continuing hostility between China and Russia, including the outbreak of actual hostilities in 1969 along the Ussuri River, the PLA [Chinese Army] must loom large in Soviet security considerations. In fact, the specter of a "two-front" war probably haunts Soviet planners as much as any other single factor. The PRC [China] has evolved from the status of junior partner in the socialist camp to a full-fledged ideological adversary to a traditional national enemy. The Soviets have demonstrated considerable nervousness over the possibility of U.S. arms sales to the PRC [China] and probably view a Sino-NATO alliance as a distinct possibility. [Note: Since this was written, the U.S. has in fact sold military weapons to China.]

While it is difficult to say with any degree of certainty how the "threat" is perceived in the Kremlin . . . [e]ven a neutral observer might concede that the picture is somewhat bleak for the Soviet leadership.

***Crocodile*, (1987)**

6/ ACTIVITY FOUR

SUPERPOWER INFLUENCE: TWO CASE STUDIES

OBJECTIVES:
In this activity, we will explore American and Soviet involvement in the affairs of other countries. Given the controversies surrounding involvements in the Third World, we will address two examples of superpower influence in developing countries: the Soviet Union in Cuba, and the United States in the Philippines. Students will be asked to compare the justification each country offers for its involvement. It is hoped that as a result of these activities students will develop a more complicated view of relations between countries, and that students will begin to formulate standards of right and wrong concerning the use of power.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Readings (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1-2 classroom periods (45 minutes each)

PROCEDURE:

■ Teachers should have students read and discuss the two case histories. Teachers may want students to do additional research into each case to supplement these readings. If so, this activity could take up to four class periods.

■ Students might simulate one of these case histories in the following manner: Divide students into three groups, with one group to represent American interests, one group to represent Soviet interests, and one group to represent the interests of the country at stake. Have students research their assigned perspective in depth, and allow the class to debate the propriety of each country's behavior. Students may want to negotiate a policy for relations between the three groups.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Questions about Reading One

■ Why did the Soviet Union become involved in Cuba? Why did the United States want to prevent this?

■ What arguments in general can you give to support interference in the affairs of other countries? What arguments can you give to support the right of countries to determine their own affairs?

■ Is it a danger to have a country sympathetic to the Soviet Union so close to the United States? Why or why not?

Questions about Reading Two

■ Why did the United States provide support to Ferdinand Marcos? What effect did Marcos' behavior as a ruler have on the United States' support of the Philippines?

■ Now that Marcos is no longer in power, how far should the United States go to keep American bases in the Philippines?

Ferdinand Marcos carried by bodyguards through rally in Manila prior to 1986 election.

READING ONE:
THE SOVIET UNION AND CUBA

Nikita Khrushchev and Fidel Castro embrace at the United Nations, 1964.

Cuba is a small country located 90 miles off the coast of Florida. It is a socialist country run by Fidel Castro. Castro came to power in 1959 after leading a revolution of peasants, workers, and students. This revolution toppled a dictator named Batista who controlled the Cuban military, and who was supported by the upper class. The upheaval caused by the revolution and the generally underdeveloped state of Cuba's economy created the need for much assistance. Although Castro had not led the revolution in the name of communism, he soon became interested in communism, and in 1961—two years after he had taken power—Castro aligned himself with the Soviets and asked the Soviet Union for support. The Soviet Union soon became the chief means of support for the Cuban economy and military. With Soviet aid, Castro built a society that provided citizens with health care, education, and other basic needs. Cuban society also began to reflect the negative aspects of its Soviet model, restricting rights such as freedom of speech and assembly.

In 1961, the United States, worried by the Cuban revolution, organized an invasion of Cuba by Cuban nationals. This attack, referred to as "the Bay of Pigs" (after the area where the invasion was attempted) was an embarrassing failure. The American-backed Cubans were easily defeated, and the attack did nothing but raise tensions between the United States and Cuba. In 1962, American surveillance discovered a military base armed with missiles under construction in Cuba. This base, constructed with Soviet assistance, raised the possibility of Soviet nuclear warheads stationed in Cuba and trained on the United States. President Kennedy ordered a blockade of Cuba, and insisted that the missiles be removed. For more than a week, the United States verged on military conflict with the Soviets. Both sides feared the possibility of an all-out nuclear war. Khrushchev claimed to be retaliating for American missiles placed close to the Soviet Union, but his act was seen as a provocative and dangerous step. After days of threats and negotiations, the missiles were withdrawn.

Today the United States remains concerned about Soviet influence in Cuba. Cuba continues to receive massive amounts of assistance from the Soviet Union, and some of the Soviet aid has enabled Cuba to send troops to Africa and Central America. These troops have helped support other political and military organizations sympathetic to the Soviet Union, such as in Angola and Nicaragua. Analysts are unsure how much of this military involvement is undertaken at the request of the Soviet Union—Cuban military activity may reflect Castro's own ambitions. Nevertheless, these Cuban troops have served Soviet interests.

READING TWO:
THE UNITED STATES AND THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines is a group of islands off the coast of the Southeast Asia mainland. It has had a tumultuous history of outside influence. For many years, the country was a colony of Spain. But following the Spanish-American War in 1898 and the Philippine-American War in 1901, the Philippines became a colony of the United States. After years of American rule, the Philippines grew independent from the United States in the 1930s. However, during World War II, the country was occupied again, this time by the Japanese. The Philippines became an independent republic again in 1946, with a capitalist economy and close ties to the United States.

The United States has over the years provided a great deal of support to the Philippine government. The United States has also established two large military bases in the Philippines—these bases are close to the Soviet Union, and are thus strategically important. To protect these bases, the United States has done all that it can to maintain order in the Philippines. American involvement has included support for the Philippine ruler Ferdinand Marcos. The United States, fearful that a communist takeover in the Philippines would lead to the loss of our military bases, helped Marcos stay in power, even though he was considered by many to be a dictator.

Many stories of human rights violations, of many beatings and killings, did not shake American support of the Marcos government. But several years ago the Marcos government was believed to have helped assassinate dissident leader Benigno Aquino, and the Philippine people had finally had enough. The people of the Philippines staged huge demonstrations against Marcos, and in 1986, under pressure from the United States, elections were scheduled. To help prevent Marcos from employing fraud and terror to influence the election, the United States sent monitors to oversee the balloting. Corazon Aquino, the widow of the assassinated dissident, came to power as a result of this election. The United States intervened again, and arranged for Marcos to leave the country. (He now lives in Hawaii.)

The Philippines remains a deeply troubled country, and the United States is still a dominating influence in daily life there and in the economy. But in 1991, an agreement allowing the United States to maintain its military bases there will expire. Some in the Philippines want the United States to leave. Others want to increase the "rent" the United States pays to control these bases. (The United States currently pays more than $180 million per year.) Debate over the future of these bases is very intense. The United States feels the bases are needed for the defense of Japan and South Korea; these bases also support our military missions in the Persian Gulf. It is argued that these bases also counterbalance Soviet bases at Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang in Vietnam. Many Philippinos, however, would like to see an end to American influence in their country, no matter what cost to American military interests.

6 / ACTIVITY FIVE

THE SOVIETS RECONSIDER INTERVENTION

OBJECTIVES:

In the early 1980s, Soviet leaders began to reconsider Soviet policies that encouraged and aided revolutionary socialist groups in the Third World. The Soviets realized that most of the groups they supported were located in some of the poorest countries, countries like Ethiopia, South Yemen, Angola, and Mozambique. The Soviets have begun to compare the cost of supporting these groups against the benefits the Soviet Union might gain from this support. Soviet leaders seem to be concluding that intervention may not be worth the cost in many of these cases.

Even in Mikhail Gorbachev's earliest speeches, he downplayed the importance of revolutionary movements in the Third World and suggested that Soviet aid to them would not increase. Frances Fukuyama, a Soviet analyst for the Rand Corporation, points out that Gorbachev "makes no concrete offers of support for allies in the Third World, and fails to mention countries of socialist orientation as being particularly close to the Soviet Union."[3]

In fact, by 1988 the Soviets were actively seeking to *end* conflicts in the Third World involving the superpowers—the Soviets have expressed interest in cooperating to end conflict in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Angola, and the Middle East. A major part of the new political thinking of the Soviet Union seems to be the avoidance of expensive conflicts that will not yield economic or political benefits to the USSR, and that will only heighten tensions between the superpowers.

Many American experts and politicians have started to trust this change in Soviet policy, but many remain skeptical, looking for additional proof of this new spirit of cooperation. However, recent events like Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan seem to confirm that the Soviets intend to concentrate on matters at home, rather than on intervention outside the country.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1-2 classroom periods (45 minutes each)

PROCEDURE:

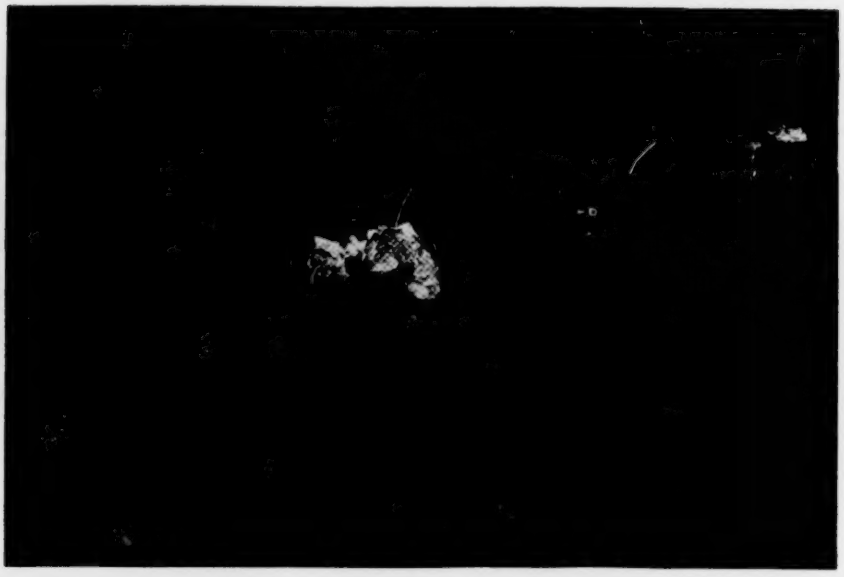
- Read and discuss "Straight Talk About Hot Spots" with students.
- Have students choose a "hot spot" currently in the news, and have them investigate the local causes of this conflict. Have them identify the major

individuals or political groups involved in the region, and have them determine various possible outcomes of the conflict. How might a settlement of these issues be negotiated? Although the role of the superpowers will be a part of this conversation, students should try to determine *local* causes of the conflict.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ What evidence does Rosenfeld give of the Soviets' "new political thinking"? How convincing is his evidence? What questions do you still have about this "new political thinking"? What might the United States do to encourage this new thinking? Should the United States try to test this new thinking? How?

■ How might a settlement to your chosen conflict be negotiated? What could be done by the Soviet Union and/or the United States to encourage such a settlement?



Soldiers of the Red Army return home from Afghanistan.

READING:

"STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT HOT SPOTS"

STEPHEN S. ROSENFELD
EXCERPT; *WASHINGTON POST,* 3 JUNE 1988.

Ronald Reagan's clear, tough pitch on human rights got the spotlight at the summit, but Mikhail Gorbachev's largely unremarked observations on "the hot trouble spots on the planet" have greater potential to alter Soviet-American relations in the next few years.

It's not that the Soviet Union's global conduct inevitably means more to Americans than its treatment of its citizens. But Soviet policy in hot spots is critical: it stirs the emotions of Americans, molds a large part of their overall view of the Kremlin and shapes American policy in turn. Moreover, it is accepted as a legitimate and pressing American concern even by those who feel that what Moscow does behind its borders is its own business.

Gorbachev made a major political statement by the showcasing and substance of what he said about hot spots.

His general proposition was that "real possibilities have appeared for solving these regional problems, for untying—unraveling these knots—these tight knots on the basis of political approaches, on the basis of a balance of interests." Political approaches: by negotiations. Balance of interests: this is something very different from asserting the primacy of the revolution or of Soviet power.

What rescues these soothing phrases from dismissal as propaganda and hype is Afghanistan, where the Kremlin is putting the principles behind them into effect. There an agreement was negotiated, and Soviet troops are already departing. The agreement reached, moreover, may leave little if any of the revolution in place, and it is a real question whether Soviet power in Afghanistan will survive Soviet withdrawal.

We Americans have perhaps been too busy taking satisfaction in a rare and richly deserved Soviet defeat to ask whether the event has any significance that goes beyond cutting losses in one disagreeable place. Gorbachev insists it does.

"I said outright to the president," he reported, "that the signing of the agreement of Afghanistan is a precedent which goes far beyond the limits of that problem alone, because it is the first case, first example, where the United States and the Soviet Union, together with those directly involved in the conflict, signed an agreement which opens up an avenue for a political solution of that problem."

The Soviet leader ticked off possibilities elsewhere. The Vietnam-Cambodia tangle, he said, "is becoming one which can be—which does lend itself to solutions very soon." In the Middle East, "there is some joining together of positions." In Central America, "processes are under way." In southern Africa, "solutions are possible."

Let us not overreact and stamp these very different problems solved. (Gorbachev skipped the Persian Gulf, by the way.) But let us grant that by his performance in Afghanistan Gorbachev has earned a hearing for Soviet initiatives in other areas. After all, if he is ready to dump a ruling communist party in a country that sits on the Soviet Union's very borders, that has long been open to Russian/Soviet influence and that has an ethnic tie to many Soviet citizens, does it not follow that he is also willing to take a second look in places geographically and otherwise farther from home?

THREATS TO THE UNITED STATES TODAY

OBJECTIVES:
This activity involves the discussion of an article written by George Ball, former Undersecretary of State of the United States. In this article, Ball points out that our preoccupation with the "Soviet threat" may prevent us from recognizing other forces that act to put our national interests in jeopardy. He does not pretend that the United States and the Soviet Union are not rivals, and he acknowledges that the Soviet Union does not share our interests. But according to Ball, our obsession with the Soviet Union prevents us from recognizing and understanding the non-Soviet causes of trouble around the world. Ball challenges us to achieve a more complicated view of the forces that shape world politics.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1-2 classroom periods (45 minutes each)

PROCEDURE:
- Read and discuss "Slaves to Animosity" by George Ball with the class.
- Have the students choose several of the conflicts or "hot spots" you have studied in the chapter and have them compare their understanding of these conflicts now with the ways these conflicts have been portrayed by American politicians. Students may have to explore news magazines, collections of speeches, and so forth to obtain these American views. Students may also want to choose to research the views of a single American politician who speaks out on foreign policy.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- How does the author define a "slave"? Does this definition correspond to your idea of slavery?
- Why does the author feel that we should change our approach to the Soviet Union?
- Are there any conflicts in the world that you feel have been misrepresented by American politicians? What was the nature of these misrepresentations? Students may feel that a conflict was wrongfully attributed to Soviet involvement; they may also think that a past involvement *should* have been attributed to the Soviets.

6 / ACTIVITY SIX

READING:
"SLAVES TO ANIMOSITY"

GEORGE BALL

EXCERPT; *BULLETIN OF THE ATOMIC SCIENTISTS,* AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1984.

The nation that indulges toward another an habitual hatred . . . is in some degrees a slave. It is a slave to its animosity.

One of the sagest admonitions in George Washington's Farewell Address was that we Americans should beware of "inveterate antipathies against particular nations."

"The nation," he said, "that indulges toward another an habitual hatred . . . is in some degrees a slave. It is a slave to its animosity . . . which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duties and its interests." And he added, "Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable when accidental or trifling occasions or disputes occur."

That advice has particular relevance today, for our government is exhibiting toward the Soviet Union such an "habitual hatred" as to make it, in Washington's phrase, "to some degrees . . . a slave to its animosity."

No sensible American would, of course, contend that the rivalry that exists between the West and those nations and peoples dominated by Moscow is without substance or that it should be taken lightly. The competition between two great power centers, each armed to the teeth with nuclear weapons, is indubitably a central element of international relations. But it should not become such an all-consuming element as to obscure the other diverse problems that now face us.

The world of the late twentieth century is enormously complex and intricate, and nothing can more seriously throw us off course in conducting international relations than to ignore that fact. Yet our foreign policy today is dominated by a passion for oversimplification, largely because living with complexity is forbiddingly difficult. It requires skill, patience, thought and a spacious view that can be achieved only with a comprehension of history and the application of sustained effort.

The easy, escapist resort is to let our "habitual hatred" of Moscow dictate our policy and to adopt a Manichean view that sees our foreign policy as an eternal struggle between America as the embodiment of righteousness and the Soviet Union as the "focus of evil." That view is heavily influenced by the movies, which base many story lines on an inevitable shoot-out between the good guys and the bad guys, the black hats and the white hats. But that is the fantasy of scriptwriters, who can always assure that right prevails and that the ending is happy. In real life there are an appalling number of subplots, while motivations and emotions are so much conditioned by history and geography—by political and economic disparities; ethnic, religious, tribal and family disputes and differences—as not to permit substituting a comforting dichotomy for complex analysis and hard decisions.

Thus we are stultifying ourselves when we base our policy on President Reagan's expressed assumption that, if the Soviet Union did not exist, the world could live in relative tranquility without "hot spots." The facts emphatically deny this. During the whole of the past decade, the developments that have most critically jeopardized and harmed Western interests have resulted from movements, actions and policies with which Moscow has had nothing to do.

OPEC's precipitate price increases dislocated the world's economy and helped

bring about a global recession. That was an initiative not of the Politburo but of a group of Third World nations exploiting their monopoly of a key source of the world's energy. Nor did the Soviets overthrow the Shah of Iran. He was pushed off his throne not by external forces, but because he had, from good motives and bad, managed to alienate almost every sector of Iranian society. Even the most paranoid ideologues cannot blame Moscow for the Iran-Iraq war. Nor is Moscow in any way the cause of the festering Arab-Israeli struggle, or the agonies of Lebanon, the communal bloodshed in India, the menacing racial tensions in South Africa, the religious feuding in Northern Ireland . . . Libya's threat to the Sudan, the comic opera conflict in the Falklands—or any numerous other "hot spots," as the President calls them.

So we make a caricature of foreign policy when we let our "habitual hatred" of the Soviet Union becloud our sense of the complexity of the world predicament. Most troubles between nations are local or regional in nature. More that 40 shooting wars are now in progress around the globe, and all but a tiny number result from ethnic or religious conflicts, racial animosities, intolerance and repression in all its forms, inequities and inequalities, ancient boundary disputes, and historic arguments that are not less bitter for having lost all discernible relevance to today's realities. The reaction of our government, almost by conditioned reflex, to force everything into the oversimplified mold of the East-West struggle—to bend and push and pull and distort parochial disputes to fit the doctrinaire concept of the polarized conflict known as the Cold War—is not only factually dishonest but a fatuous delusion. . . .

. . . [L]et us avoid the seductive glibness of oversimplification. We live in a complex world and we shall succeed only if we acknowledge that fact and shape our plans and meet our obligations in those terms.

We make a caricature of foreign policy when we let our "habitual hatred" of the Soviet Union becloud our sense of the complexity of the world predicament.

6/ACTIVITY SEVEN

THE CONCEPT OF INTERDEPENDENCE

OBJECTIVES:

As we have seen, the United States and the Soviet Union have many differences, and these differences create all kinds of conflict: political, economic, religious, moral, military. Each country has developed a psychological mindset that portrays the other country as an inevitable enemy, and at times, each country's interpretation of world events is distorted by this mindset. Since each side typically sees itself in an all-or-nothing competition with the other, both sides lose sight of the benefits that might come from cooperation. The risk remains: if both sides fail to restrain themselves, large scale conflict is almost inevitable.

During World War II, the Soviet Union joined the Allies to defeat Hitler's Third Reich.

By learning about the Soviet Union, we can begin to understand the limitations of both American and Soviet mindsets. We may learn to manage our conflicts with the Soviet Union more realistically, and we may even develop an appreciation for our interdependence with the Soviet Union. This section will explore what might be involved in this idea of interdependence.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1 classroom period (45 minutes)

PROCEDURE:

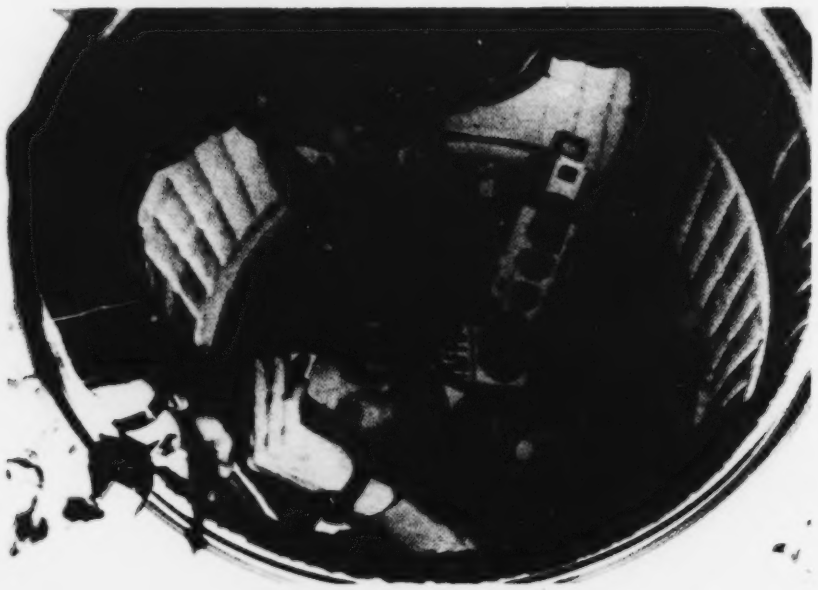
■ Read and discuss "Interdependence." Then have students choose one of the following statements and write a brief response to it.

1. The Soviet Union and the United States must manage the conflict between them and concentrate upon avoiding war. The two countries must learn to coexist.

2. The United States should work to undermine the Soviet Union's position in ways that avoid war. However, the United States should not worry about peaceful coexistence.

3. The United States should have no illusions about our interdependence with the Soviet Union—it's either them or us, and armed conflict may be necessary.

■ At this point in the curriculum, students may be ready to read and discuss the essay that appeared in the beginning of this guide, "American Schools of Thought About the Soviet Union."



American and Soviet space teams joined together in the Apollo/Soyuz project of 1975.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

■ How is it possible to coexist with someone with whom you disagree?

■ What kinds of guarantees would be necessary to insure the survival of both the American and the Soviet systems? What rules of conduct should be established?

READING:
INTERDEPENDENCE

The Soviet Union and the United States, and communism and capitalism, are in opposition to one another. Neither country wants the other country to grow stronger, and both countries would like the other to change. This rivalry might go too far—both the Soviet Union and the United States could destroy each other with nuclear weapons.

To prevent the destruction of both systems, the Soviet Union and the United States must find ways to guarantee that nuclear war does not break out between them, and both countries must establish these guarantees without insisting that the other country abandon its system. The stable coexistence of the two systems is a real possibility, and a pragmatic solution for survival.

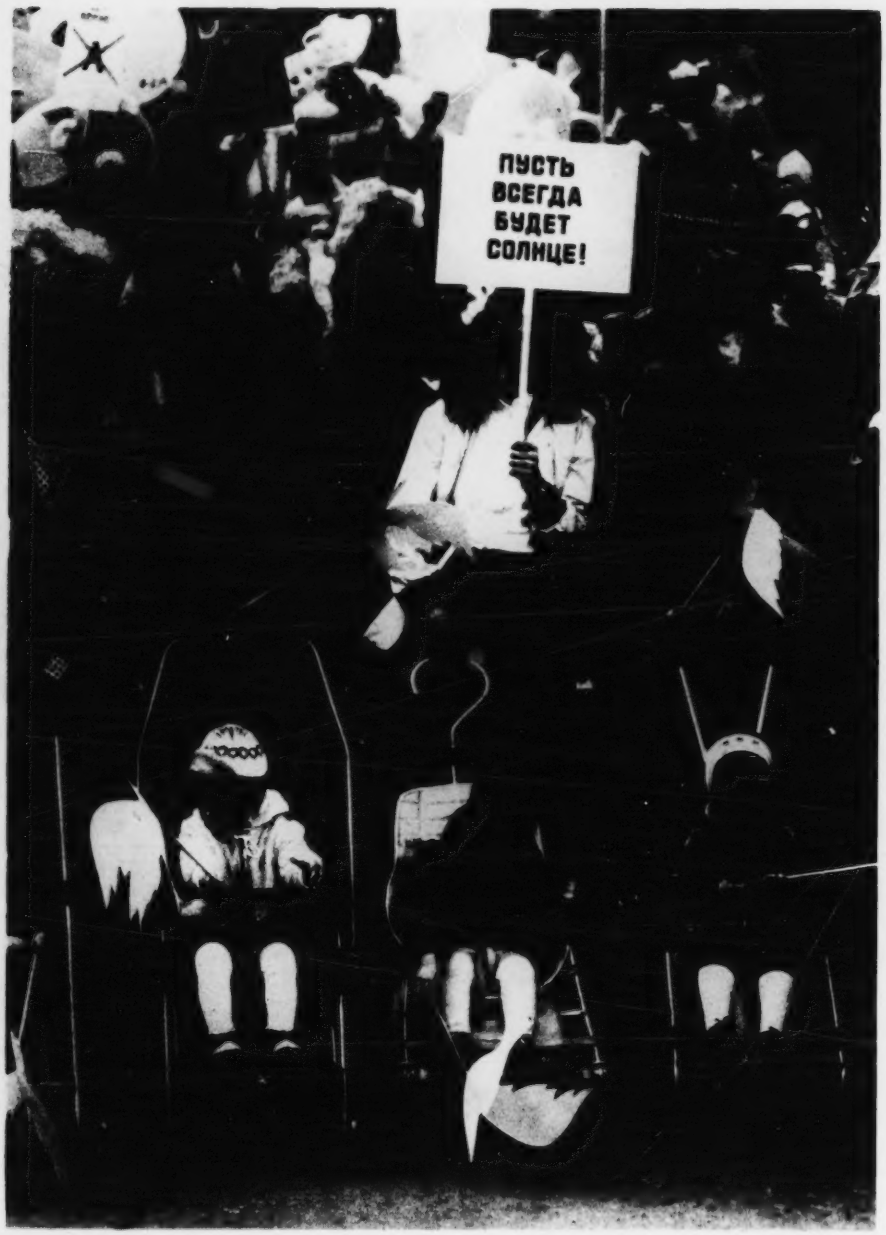
Consider these remarks by former President Richard Nixon:

Summit meetings between leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union have become essential if peace is to be preserved. Such meetings will contribute to the cause of peace, however, only if both leaders recognize that tensions between the two nations are due not to the fact that we do not *understand each other but to the fact that we* do *understand that we have diametrically opposed ideological and geopolitical interests.*

But the United States and the Soviet Union have one major goal in common: survival. The purpose of summit meetings is to develop rules of engagement that could prevent our profound differences from bringing us into armed conflict that could destroy us both.[1]

1. Richard Nixon, *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1985.

American and Soviet scientists formed a joint nuclear test monitoring team in the Soviet Union in 1987.



CLOSING ACTIVITY

CREATING AN AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION

CLOSING ACTIVITY:

CREATING AN AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION

OBJECTIVES:
Now that the class has reviewed many of the considerations that might go into policy-making, the class should be given an opportunity to draft their own versions of an American policy toward the Soviet Union. Students should work together, first reviewing the materials and issues explored in this curriculum, and then composing their policies.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Questions for Consideration (included)

TIME REQUIRED: 1-2 classroom periods (45 minutes each)

PROCEDURE:
■ Divide the students into groups. (You may decide to use the groups formed in the game in the Introductory Activities.) Have the students compose a policy toward the Soviet Union. This policy should have two parts: first, have students list and analyze the goals to be achieved in US–Soviet relations, and then have them compose a list of concrete actions to be taken to reach these goals. Provide the students with the following questions for consideration.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
■ Use the "Questions for Consideration" that follow.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

Making An American Policy Toward the Soviet Union

Can we "learn to cooperate" with the Soviet Union? What do we need to know before we can trust the Soviet Union? How exaggerated are our fears of communism? What can we do to reduce tensions between the two countries? How can we negotiate with one another in spite of our differences?

Is the Soviet Union a legitimate system? How can we tell if the Soviet Union has the support of its citizens? What can we learn from the Soviet Union, and what can the Soviet Union learn from us? What would it mean for the two nations to treat each other as equals?

Should we try to change the Soviet system? What kind of influence might be appropriate for us to exercise upon the Soviet Union? What changes do the Soviets themselves wish to make in their system?

How should we consider Soviet influence throughout the world? What kind of Soviet influence upon other nations can be tolerated and what kind should be countered? How do we determine threats to American interests? How do we determine what American interests are?

How do we respond to the Soviet Union? What actions are appropriate to take against the Soviet Union if we disagree with them? Should we ever use extreme measures? Which ones, and in what circumstances? Should we avoid nuclear conflict at all costs, or should we consider nuclear war to be an option? Are there acceptable forms of low-intensity conflict? Should we use our country's resources for military purposes first? How can we weigh military versus domestic needs? How can we maintain our own democratic and moral principles when responding to the Soviet Union?

Should we trade with the Soviet Union? Should we trade without restrictions, or allow trade only where American interests are clearly served? Should we use trade and other kinds of economic pressure in response to Soviet actions we disagree with?

Should human rights be an important issue in our relationship with the Soviet Union? Should we expect all countries to uphold the same standards for human rights? What standards should be upheld? What human rights issues should we emphasize with the Soviets?

Should we pursue arms control? Should we negotiate for arms reductions? What kind of reductions should we strive for? Shall we negotiate only when we are certain that we are ahead in the arms race? Or should we continue to increase our military strength, thus forcing the Soviets to compete with their resources? How can we guarantee that both sides respect the agreements we make? Should we work with the Soviets to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries?

Should we hold regular summit meetings? Under what circumstances should the two countries meet? What other countries might be involved in these meetings? What other kinds of cooperation should we promote between the two countries?

APPENDIX

DIFFERENCES: USA/USSR

JANET VAILLANT, ROBERTA SNOW, JOHN RICHARDS II, and JOHN E. BACHMAN

INTRODUCTION

Why study the Soviet Union?

The Soviet Union continues to be a major preoccupation of American foreign policy as well as of the American press and the American public. It is a subject that arouses strong feelings.

Most people agree that the Soviet Union is our chief competitor and adversary in the world today, yet many see it, much as Winston Churchill did some 40 years ago, as "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." This is not the only view Americans are learning about the Soviet Union. It is important that we do so, for knowledge can help prevent misunderstandings and miscalculations that would be dangerous for everyone on earth.

What are the special challenges in teaching about the Soviet Union?

Strong feelings and stereotypes often make it hard for students and teachers to look objectively at that country and its peoples. Sometimes teachers are accused of being pro-Soviet simply for showing interest in the Soviet Union.

Persons who try to understand the Soviet viewpoint may be labeled anti-American. Even if this hurdle is surmounted, it is difficult to look carefully and objectively at differences. Too often the temptation to judge quickly is strong, and such judgments become a substitute for understanding rather than its result. Finally, it takes courage to begin study of a controversial topic without the knowledge to answer all foreseeable questions about it.

On the other hand, experts and statesmen are still learning and disagreeing about the USSR. Even as these materials are being prepared, the

Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev is discussing reforms and experts are arguing about what they mean and their chance of succeeding.

We have set out generalizations about the basic structures of the Soviet system. This is the system Gorbachev is trying to reform. His policies may—or may not—lead to basic changes in the future.

What is the objective of these materials and student activities?

These materials highlight differences. Most Americans recognize that the Soviet Russians are "like us" in the sense that people on the subway in Moscow look very much like those in New York or Chicago. Soviets love their children, enjoy a good meal, care about their friends, and enjoy Sundays in the country. That is the simple part. (To emphasize this point, teachers may want to show a videotape—see resources section.)

It is far more difficult to recognize and understand cultural differences. These may be subtle. Soviet and American societies start from very different premises about human nature and the ideal relationship between the individual and society. These differences result from historical experience and a culture that has ancient roots.

We have attempted to eliminate value judgments from the student materials and to focus instead on facts about Soviet goals and general practice. We do not, for example, use the word "totalitarian" because it carries a whole spectrum of associations and evaluations. Instead, we describe the Soviet government's attempt to organize as many areas of life as possible.

Throughout these activities, we suggest that teachers encourage their students to try to *understand* Soviet goals and behavior before comparing and evaluating them.

How may they be introduced?

These materials are written for high school students and may be used in social studies courses on world cultures, European or world history, sociology, humanities, or current events. Each unit can form the basis for one class or many, depending on need and inclination.

There are student readings, questions, and suggested activities on three topics: geography, politics, and economics. These may be duplicated and handed directly to students. Students should be able to answer the questions on the basis of the facts presented and speculate about what it would be like to live in a society where these things were true. Students will naturally compare the situation with that in the United States or their own societies. The information provided here is chosen to highlight significant differences so that students will have a basis for such comparisons and contrasts. Additional activities will provoke further thought and research.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

This section will introduce you to some information to guide class discussions on issues raised here. Newspaper stories about Gorbachev and his reforms may provide current information about changes in the Soviet Union to provoke added classroom discussion about the nature and prospects for these reforms. For more background information, many teachers have found *From Russia to USSR* helpful (see resources list).

Geography

The Soviet Union has been called "a country of countries" because it includes so many ethnic groups living in their original lands. It is therefore misleading to call the country Russia. Nontheless, ethnic Russians, 52 percent of the population, monopolize political control of the country.

The historic term 'Russia' is correct only for the old Tsarist empire. This empire, which was built up over a long period of time and whose borders approximated those of the modern Soviet Union, was overthrown by the Revolution of 1917 and replaced by a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Each Soviet republic is constitutionally free to secede and become independent at any time (though this legal right is, like some other rights granted by the Soviet constitution, inoperable in practice). Soviet Armenians, Ukrainians, Latvians, Georgians, and Uzbeks all have one thing in common: they dislike being called Russsian! For at least some of these nationalities, such as the Armenians, being in the Soviet Union has many advantages economically and politically; for example, the Armenians are protected from the hated Turks.

Size has many advantages (manpower, abundance of resources) but also some disadvantages (security, communication, and transportation problems). Japan is a good example of a country whose small size has not prevented it from becoming a superpower, at least economically.

Russian and Soviet history is filled with wars, fought on Russian or neighboring soil. There have been wars with Finns, Swedes, Lithuanians, Poles, Germans, Turks, Persians, French, English, Afghans, Chinese, Mongols, Japanese, and others. This is in stark contrast to our own history, which has seen only one war against a neighbor.

The Russians' passionate attachment to their land and their inherent distrust of foreigners may stem from their history. World War II is a good example. In that conflict, 20 million Soviet lives were lost (compared with 350,000 American lives), and much of European Russia was devastated. The city of Leningrad alone lost well over a million people, a majority from

starvation. Soviet citizens are often reminded of this fact. They are not, however, reminded of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact or the Soviet invasion of Finland in the winter of 1939–1940.

In discussing the northerly location and harsh climate of the Soviet Union, it is important to note that survival under adverse conditions requires cooperation. Might Russian emphasis on the value of the collective and the relative unimportance they place on the individual result in some measure from this environmental adversity?

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

The Communist Party justifies its power by claiming to understand and represent the true interests of society as defined by Marx and developed by Lenin. Party members call their belief system "scientific socialism," suggesting by analogy with the physical sciences that they have discovered the only correct way to organize society.

The Party, as specialists in this science, will lead the people of the world toward a classless society. As there is only one party, and it controls the press and media, a limited range of views is aired publicly.

While Mr. Gorbachev must be concerned ultimately about the level of popular satisfaction, his continuation in office depends upon whether or not he satisfies his fellow Politburo members. Conflicting viewpoints are represented in the Politburo—for example, members debate whether to spend more on the military or consumer goods or whether to encourage more public discussion of controversial issues—but decisions are taken in closed meetings.

In the United States, important issues are supposed to be worked out largely in public and voted on by Congress. Contrast the roles of Congress and the Supreme Soviet, the highest government legislative body according to the Soviet constitution, which meets for about two weeks per year and usually votes unanimously.

In the Soviet Union, members of all committees must be approved by the committee above them in the hierarchy—that is, all members of the Central Committee must be approved by the Politburo (see chart). This is in direct contradiction to the formal statutes that provide for the Central Committee to elect the Politburo.

The Party also must approve all candidates for the judiciary, the soviets, and other top positions. Gorbachev is experimenting with contested elections among candidates approved by the party. Thus there is no real division of power in the USSR.

Because there are Party members in all organizations in Soviet society, from the workplace to hobby groups, sports clubs, and schools, the Party presence is felt throughout the country.

If the Party decides that a worker with a good job has violated its wishes, the worker may be demoted or dismissed. After all, everyone works for the State and the Party controls the State. This is, obviously, an excellent way to exert pressure for political conformity.

The KGB performs all the functions equivalent to those of the U.S. Coast Guard, Secret Service, CIA, FBI, and the National Security Agency. All of this power is under the control of a single director who, as of 1987, is a member of the Politburo. The number of KGB employees inside the USSR is estimated at 1.5 million, with 250,000 additional operatives abroad.

Comparison of the Soviet and American constitutions can focus attention on important political differences in the two societies. Note that the Soviet constitution says little about the role of the party, which in fact controls all nominees to elected and appointed positions, and so effectively controls government personnel and policy.

The documents also have many similarities, such as a list of civil rights and provision for elected legislatures. In the USSR, however, all rights are to be exercised in keeping with the interests of society. The Soviet constitution does not say who decides what these interests are. This is where the Party's "guiding role" fills an important gap. In the USSR, all individual rights are conditional ones. Article 70, which prohibits "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda," has also proved important, for it is the article under which dissenters, writers, and religious figures have been prosecuted. Thus what appear to be small differences from the American Constitution have proved very important in Soviet practice.

The introduction to the present Soviet Constitution discusses historical, social, and economic issues to show the timeliness, as opposed to the timelessness, of the document. According to Marx, political institutions must change as society changes. The Soviet Constitution describes the historical stage achieved by Soviet society and establishes the government institutions, laws, civil rights, and citizens' obligations appropriate for such a society.

THE ECONOMY

One goal of the Russian revolution was to do away with economic exploitation and equalize the economic circumstances in which people live. This equality was the original objective of the Soviet planned economy.

Today, some features of the Soviet political system, its centralization and control by a single party, greatly influence how the planned economy works. Economic decisions, such as allocations of investment, pricing, and production quotas, are made at the center in keeping with party priorities. Other aspects of the economic system, such as the unavailability of computers and copying machines, are more related to political concerns—in this case, about controlling the distribution of information—than to economic ones. If you think about what individuals working on their own with computers have contributed to growth and development in the United States, for example, it becomes evident what a high economic price the Soviets have been willing to pay to control information.

Some economic problems, such as periodic shortages and delays, poor quality goods, and lack of incentives for innovation, result from the practical difficulties of planning a complex industrial economy. Such problems are often exacerbated by political considerations such as the Party's determination to maintain centralized control and its pervasive distrust of local and individual initiative.

Prices and quotas in the USSR reflect social values determined by the Party. Basic commodities are cheap, luxuries expensive; there are many trucks and relatively few cars. All governments make some effort to organize or regulate production. Perhaps by considering what is regulated in the United States and why, one can reflect in general on the reasons for government regulation.

Private enterprise in response to market demand is in direct contradiction to the basic idea that the well-educated experts of the party-state know best what is worth producing. Yet central plans stifle initiative, the desirable as well as the undesirable. Finding incentives for innovators is a large problem for the official Soviet economy. Why should someone experiment or take chances only to receive the same pay, no matter what?

There is plenty of incentive for those operating in the gray market, who provide services needed for others and make money for themselves. A dressmaker may well create a network of clients, employees, and sources for materials, and so develop quite a large business (as has been the case), but this is technically illegal.

Underlying many Soviet policies is a basic contrast in American and Soviet attitudes toward the individual. Most Americans think that individuals

left to their own devices will be creative and work well. The Soviet Russians are more pessimistic. They think that individuals need to be organized and managed so that society as a whole will benefit. If not, they will make trouble and be disorderly. The leaders of the party-state have an additional interest in seeing to it that all important decisions are made at the center: the maintenance of their power.

By making a factory plan (see student activities), students may get an inkling of the complexity of central planning. Asked what to do if something such as thread for baseballs were not delivered on time, students might understand why Soviet factory managers often make barter deals among themselves, horde extra materials left over from an earlier year, or make poorly sewn baseballs to save thread and make their numerical quota and get a bonus, without paying attention to the quality of the baseballs. See if students will make many small nails rather than a mix to satisfy the customer.

Some teachers have had success dividing the class into groups and telling each that it will be rewarded for accomplishing some task (high grades, arriving at class on time, and so on). After a few days the students can discuss what influence, if any, such collective responsibility had on their behavior or attitude toward other members of the group. This will work only if there is a real reward (as there is, for example, in the USSR a bonus for factory workers who fulfill or exceed their quotas).

STUDENT MATERIALS

GEOGRAPHY

The activities of *any* country or people are affected by the environment. This is especially true for the Soviet Union. Its size, location, climate, topography, and resources are among the factors that have influenced its history, culture, and society.

■ Russia and the Soviet Union are not the same entity. Since 1922, the country we often call Russia, which inherited the territory of the historic Russian empire, has been correctly known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) or the Soviet Union, for short.

■ Russia is one republic among the 15 that make up the federal state called the USSR. Each republic is the homeland of a major ethnic group. There are more than 85 smaller ethnic groups. Of the republics, the Russian republic is by far the largest and most important. It stretches from the Baltic and Black seas in the west to the Pacific Ocean (see map). Of the USSR's total population of 271 million, 52 percent are Russians. They dominate the life of the country.

Whereas the many ethnic groups in the United States left their homelands to immigrate here, most ethnic groups in the Soviet Union still inhabit their historic homelands and continue to speak their native language. In a very real sense, the USSR is a "country of countries."

■ The Soviet Union is the world's largest country. Its 8.6 million square miles make the country larger than the United States and Canada combined, spanning 11 time zones, as compared with four in the continental United States. When it is 8:00 P.M. in Moscow, the capital, it is already 7:00 A.M. the following day at the far eastern end of Siberia. To cross the USSR on the Trans-Siberian railroad takes seven days.

■ Soviet borders stretch 37,250 miles, or 1.5 times the earth's circumference. About 27,000 of these miles are coastline, mostly on the Arctic Ocean. The USSR borders 12 countries. It spans large sections of two continents.

■ Because the USSR is so far north, temperatures can be cold. The average temperature on a typical January day in Verkhoyansk, a small city in eastern Siberia, is minus 56 degrees F. Areas far from the ocean experience extremes of temperature, the so-called continental climate.

Yakutsk, another large Siberian city, has recorded a low of minus 84 degrees F in the winter and a summer high of 120 degrees F. The coldness is dominant and significant: it produces short growing seasons and causes most ports and rivers to be frozen for much of the year. In Leningrad, the second-largest Soviet city, the ground is normally snow-covered for 160 days a year.

■ The climate of the USSR is dry. Major droughts have occurred throughout its history, but between 1979 and 1984, a series of six poor harvests forced the Soviets to import foods from the United States and elsewhere.

■ The Soviet Union possesses an abundant supply of natural resources, including the world's largest oil reserves, 40 percent of the world's natural gas, and one-third of the world's coal. Harsh climate and long distances make it difficult, however, to utilize them effectively.

■ High mountains in the Soviet Union include Communism Peak (24,250 feet) and Mt. Elbrus, the highest mountain in Europe. These high peaks are located along the southern border. There are no significant natural boundaries along most of the border with China, nor in the west. As a result, the Russians have often been attacked by their neighbors, and, when strong, the Soviets, and the Russian empire before them, have expanded to control neighboring states.

Questions for Discussion

■ Why is it inappropriate to call the Soviet Union Russia? Why do many Soviet citizens resent it when outsiders call their country Russia?

■ What might be some of the advantages and disadvantages of the Soviet Union's larger size?

■ How does climate affect people's behavior? How might the harsh winter climate of the USSR affect those who have to live with it?

■ How do the Soviet boundaries compare with those of the United States? What problems might arise from sharing borders with 12 other countries?

Research and Activities

■ Select any three major ethnic groups in the USSR and compare them with any three major ethnic groups in the United States, using the following criteria: total numbers, percentage of the country's population, and where the population of each group is located. Can the Soviet Union be called a melting pot, as the United States sometimes is?

■ Research information on the 15 republics of the Soviet Union and prepare a tourist brochure describing the attractions of each. These could then be combined into a brochure for the entire country.

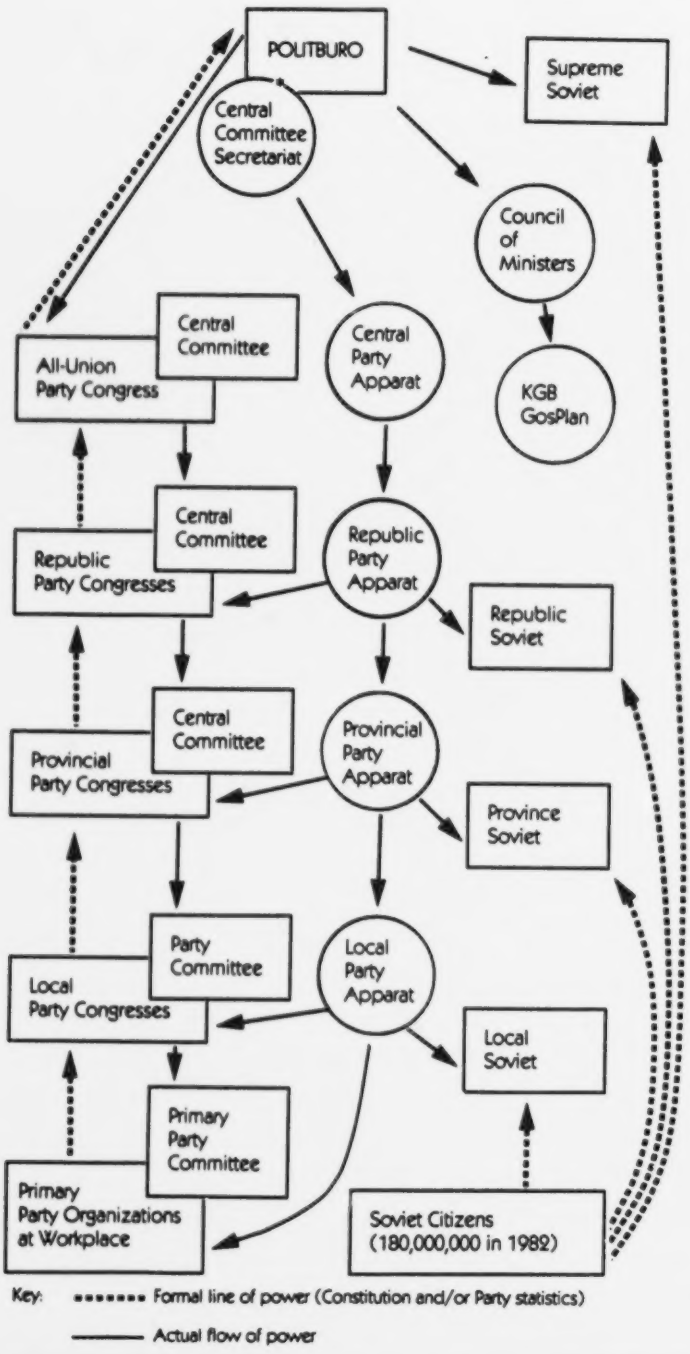
■ Find out the latitude of your town. Trace that same parallel of latitude on a map of the USSR. What major city, if any, lies at the same latitude? Do the same for New York City; Miami, Florida; and Anchorage, Alaska. For contrast, find the latitudes of major Soviet cities (for example, Moscow, Leningrad, Tashkent). Where would this put these cities if they were in North America?

■ Write a one-page paper supporting the following statement: Large size contributes greatly to the achievement of superpower status.

■ Write an essay on how the climate of your town affects your life-style and how a climate similar to that of Verkhoyansk might change that life-style.

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

The Soviet system reflects the idea that "the best government is the one that organizes most." By contrast, in the United States we start with the idea that "the best government is the one that governs least." Americans expect the government to protect each citizen's right to make his or her own way in the world, as long as one person does not prevent others from doing the same. Soviet citizens are taught to work to build the perfect Soviet society, and to expect that their personal lives will improve as society improves.



The Soviet system of government.

■ Only one political party exists in the USSR—the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).

■ The Communist Party makes all important policy decisions. The government's role is to carry them out.

■ The top party leaders are a group of 10–16 people who make up the Politburo. Its chairman is the General Secretary of the party, Mikhail Gorbachev.

■ The Party is organized in a hierarchical way. The Central Committee accepts decisions of the Politburo. The Republic Party accepts decisions of the Central Committee. (See chart.)

■ Student organizations prepare young people to enter the Communist Party. Most students (10–14) join the Young Pioneers. After that, fewer join the Komsomol (Young Communist League, 14–28). Membership in the Komsomol is considered an accomplishment.

■ About 9 percent of Soviet adults are Communist Party members. Most of them hold regular jobs, but some, an estimated 200,000, work full time for the Party. New members are selected by Party committees after a trial period. Membership is considered an honor. Party members receive many privileges in Soviet society, such as access to special stores carrying better clothes, food, and other goods than are sold in the stores open to the general public.

■ Every business and institution employing three or more Communist Party members has a Primary Party Organization. They hold meetings to make sure that everyone carries out the Party's decisions.

■ The Communist Party says it has the right to rule because it knows what is best for the people. Its members learn what is best by studying the science of Marxist-Leninism.

■ No one can hold an important job in the USSR (for example, newspaper editor, school superintendent, factory manager, town official) without the approval of the Communist Party. In this way, the Party assures loyalty and makes sure that key people do what it wants. For this reason, the Soviet system is sometimes called a party-state.

■ The Committee for State Security (KGB) is the single largest security and intelligence organization in the world. Its job is to ensure that all Soviet citizens are loyal to the party-state. The KGB is also in charge of foreign intelligence gathering.

■ The Party believes that ideas are important and can be dangerous. It does not allow any basic criticism of the system to be published, though criticism of certain social activities such as corruption or laziness may be encouraged. Gorbachev is now calling for more openness (*glasnost*), but basic features of the system such as the political monopoly of the party have not been questioned.

■ While religious organizations have the right to exist, the party-state discourages religious participation. It does this by antireligious propaganda, by limiting the number of churches, and by making it difficult for people who openly practice their religion to get the best education and good jobs.

■ The Supreme Soviet of the USSR, its top legislative body, only meets for two weeks each year. The leader of the USSR is not the President of the Supreme Soviet, who is only the titular head of state, but rather the General Secretary of the Communist Party, who at present is Mikhail Gorbachev. He leads the party-state by agreement of the other members of the Politburo.

■ Since policy is decided by the party, and since all government soviets (councils) are filled with people chosen by the Party, the soviets always approve party decisions.

■ In 1982, 99.8 percent of eligible Soviet citizens voted. Ballots in Soviet elections normally contain only one name. Nominees to soviets are chosen to represent all groups in Soviet society.

THE USSR HAS HAD FOUR CONSTITUTIONS —IN 1918, 1924, 1936, and 1977.

According to the theories of Marx and Lenin, political institutions must change as society changes. The Soviet Constitution has a historical section that explains the accomplishments of Soviet society that must be reflected in a new constitution. The Constitution also describes the workings and responsibilities of government bodies and the rights and duties of citizens.

A number of rights are guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution, including the right to work, the right to rest, the right to health care, housing, and education, as well as freedom of speech, press, and assembly. These rights are to be used "in accordance with the people's interests and for the purpose of strengthening and developing the socialist system." Parents, according to the Constitution, should raise their children so that they will be eager to do work that benefits society.

If you want to know who has power and how it is used in the Soviet Union, you will not find out by reading the Soviet Constitution. The Constitution does not describe the role and functioning of the Party in any detail.

The Constitution does provide for elected councils, called soviets, ('soviet' is the Russian word for council). The Supreme Soviet of the USSR is the highest legislative body and has the constitutional right to make laws and elect top government leaders. (For the text of the Constitution, see the resources section.)

Questions for Discussion

- Describe the role of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union. How do you get to be a member?
- Suppose a serious arms control agreement is reached between the United States and the USSR. Who needs to approve this agreement in the USSR? (See chart.) Who needs to approve it in the United States?
- What is a "primary party organization"? Why do you suppose that there are so many of these organizations?
- What rights are guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution? By the U.S. Constitution?
- What are the advantages of being a Party member in the Soviet Union?
- What are some of the means the Communist Party uses to guarantee that its policy is carried out?

Research and Activities

■ You are on an international board that must decide whether pornographic magazines should be sold in airport newsstands. Prepare a three-minute presentation to represent your country's policy about press regulation (United States, USSR, others). After presentations, the class should take a vote.

■ Why does the Soviet Constitution keep changing? Do you think the U.S. Constitution should change? How? Why not? Organize a debate.

■ How might the Communist Party affect the daily life of a person who works in a school?

■ What might be the advantages or disadvantages of having a centralized security and intelligence organization that reports to the Politburo? What security and intelligence organizations can you identify within the United States? To whom do they report?

■ In the Soviet Union, citizens are taught that their lives will be better if they work to improve the entire society. In contrast, many citizens in the United States believe in "American individualism" and work to improve their own lives. Do you think American individualism is beneficial to your school? To society? Why or why not?

■ Human rights activists have often criticized Article 70 of the Soviet Constitution, which prohibits "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda." Research some cases of people sentenced under this article. What do these cases tell you about the workings of the Soviet political system? For more information about such cases, contact Amnesty International USA, 322 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10001.

■ Construct an organizational chart of the U.S. government. Compare it with a chart of the Soviet government. Who holds the top government job in the Soviet Union? Is he the equivalent of the person who holds the top government job in the United States? What organization in the Soviet Union corresponds to the U.S. Congress? To the American Cabinet?

■ Debate the advantages and disadvantages of a one-party system, a two-party system, and a multiparty system (common in Western Europe). Can a single party represent all the people? Can two?

■ It is the 10th anniversary of the Soviet Constitution and the 200th anniversary of the American Constitution. Prepare a poster or visual display celebrating the highlights of each.

ECONOMICS

Differences in the way the American and Soviet economies are organized are among the most fundamental differences between the two societies. The Soviets believe that in order to be sure that the economy functions for the public good, it must be planned by experts who keep the interests of the people in mind. The goal is to create a society in which everyone has a job and is paid fairly for what he does.

Gorbachev is trying to make some economic reforms. The system described here is the present one. Only the future will tell whether the Soviet economy will be changed in basic ways.

■ The Soviet economy is organized according to the principles of state socialism. This means that the state owns all factories, farms (except those that are cooperatives), newspapers, banks, stores, and natural resources. It is a planned economy. Government planners and ministries set goals for factories telling them how much to produce, for stores telling them how much to sell, and for other organizations, too, ranging from publishing houses to recording studios, from clothing manufacturers to construction companies. The government planners and ministries also set prices for everything that will be sold in the government stores.

■ Businessmen, factory workers, doctors, television producers, journalists, teachers, shopkeepers, firemen and officially approved artists all work for organizations that belong to the state and are paid regular salaries. In this way, the party-state is their true employer.

■ Managers are judged and rewarded for meeting targets set by the economic plan. A recording studio, for example, is given a quota (number) of records to cut, as well as the raw materials needed to produce them and a list of officially approved music groups. People at the studio will be paid if they meet their quota, whether or not people want to buy their records and tapes. The state store has to receive and sell whatever they produce.

■ The Soviet system allows you to own a sewing machine and make clothes to sell to your friends. No matter how many people want to buy your clothes, however, you may not hire someone to work for you. That sort of private enterprise, where one person works for another, is considered illegal because the worker might be exploited. In November 1986, a decree of the Supreme Soviet made an exception so that it is now legal to hire family members to work in a family business, such as a restaurant.

■ The monthly wage for the average Soviet family, in which both husband and wife work, is 350-400 rubles ($490-$560 at the official exchange rate).

■ In 1980, the average monthly rental of a three-room apartment in Moscow was $37. A ride on the Moscow subway costs 5 kopecks (about 6 cents). Medical care is free. All education, including university education, is free. The least expensive cars cost about $10,000.

■ There is almost no unemployment in the Soviet Union. If people do not work well or are no longer needed, it is very difficult to fire them.

■ It is virtually impossible to get a home computer in the Soviet Union. Occasionally, one similar to the Commodore is for sale in a secondhand shop for about $4400. Copying machines are kept under lock and key.

■ Often shortages occur in one area and surpluses in another. Energetic individuals work to fill in gaps, whether by moonlighting as a cab driver in a government-owned car, or by fixing home equipment. Factory managers often trade raw materials with one another. Such activities make up the "gray market" or second economy. Economists estimate that the gray market accounts for about 10 percent of all economic activity in the Soviet Union. A Supreme Soviet decree of November 1986 legalized some of these activities for the first time. Now people may be self-employed and apply for licenses to run family businesses.

■ In a much smaller black market, individuals violate the law, for example, by buying rock tapes from foreigners and reselling them.

■ The total value of everything produced in the Soviet Union is about 60 percent of what is produced in the United States. The total population of the USSR (1981) was 267,700,000 compared to 229,810,000 for the USA.

Questions for Discussion

■ Who is paid by the government in the USSR?

■ Why do you think computer/word processors are so hard to get in the Soviet Union and copying machines are so carefully guarded? What are the implications of this for the economy? For political life?

■ Compare the cost of Soviet and American rent, education, medical care, cars, and public transportation. What is relatively cheap and relatively expensive in each country?

■ Why do you think the Soviet government insists on owning all newspapers and publishing houses? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this system?

■ What part does the Soviet government play in planning or regulating business? Why do they think this is so important?

Research Activities

■ You are a Soviet economic planner charged with making a plan for a record company or baseball factory. What would you need to include? How and with whom would you have to coordinate? What problems might be encountered? What problems might the manager charged with carrying out the plan encounter?

■ You are a popular, much-sought-after, Soviet dressmaker who works at home. What can you do legally to make more money? What would you do if you found yourself in this situation?

■ You are a Soviet factory manager allocated 100,000 pounds of metal for making nails. Your quota in the annual plan is 100,000 pounds of nails. Remember that you and your workers get a bonus for making quota. How will you achieve this? How will you decide what size of nail to make?

■ Investigate government regulation in the United States by looking into the activities of an organization such as the Food and Drug Administration or the Interstate Commerce Commission. Why does the U.S. government regulate business activity? What criteria does it use for intervening in the free play of the market? Compare this with the regulatory role of the Soviet government.

RESOURCES

The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Russia and the Soviet Union (Cambridge University Press, 1982), 492 pp. The best single-volume reference book. Comprehensive, authoritative, and highly informative on subjects from ballet to nuclear arms, this handsome, well-illustrated volume belongs in every school library.

"Comrades" (1986), TV series on Soviet people today. Films, Inc., 5547 Ravenswood Avenue, Chicago, IL 60640. Alan Bookbinder et al. *Comrades* (New York: New American Library). The book written to accompany the TV series provides excellent detail about everyday life. Suitable for student use.

Current Digest of the Soviet Press. Weekly translations of articles from the Soviet press. Compendiums suitable for classroom use are published from time to time. The Soviet Constitution appears in the compendium *The USSR Today,* 5th ed., 1981. Available from *Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* 1314 Kinnear Road, Columbus, OH 43212.

"A Day at School in Moscow" (1986), 24-minute color videotape that shows everyday student life. International Children's Project. A unit about education and school life accompanies the film. Center for Psychological Studies, 1493 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, MA 02139.

From Russia to USSR: A Narrative and Documentary History by Janet Vaillant and John Richards II (Longman, 1985). A high school text with brief narrative and lively readings from original sources designed to bring history to life.

A Guide to Films About the Soviet Union (1985). More than 40 videos and films reviewed by a panel of experts. Committee for National Security, 1601 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Suite 301, Washington DC 20009.

Russia/Soviet Union: A Guide to Print Materials for Teachers, (Elizabeth Talbot and Janet Vaillant, eds. 1985), 110 pp. Detailed reviews of 70 books suitable for middle and high school students, brief annotations of many others including visual histories, correspondent' books, and references. Information on video and film distributors. Available from Elizabeth Talbot, Russian and East European Center, University of Illinois, 1208 W. California Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801. $4.00 prepaid.

Soviet Life. Official English-language Soviet publication for distribution in the United States. What Soviets would like Americans to know. Good pictures. subscriptions: 1706 18th Street N.W., Washington, DC 20009.

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ENDNOTES

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5. Richard Bernstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), 203.

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3. Pipes, 26.

4. Georgi A. Arbatov and Willem Oltmans, *The Soviet Viewpoint* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1983), 148.

5. Vladimir Bukovsky, "The Peace Movement and the Soviet Union," *Commentary 73*, no. 5 (May 1982): 40-41.

6. Jerry Hough, *The Soviet Union and Social Science Theory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), viii.

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1. Pipes' remarks throughout are drawn from his essay "Détente: Moscow's View," in Richard Pipes, ed., *Soviet Strategy in Europe* (New York: Crane, Russak & Company, Inc., 1976).

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Thinking About the Soviet Union explores the government and economy of the Soviet Union, the nature of communism, human rights, *glasnost* and *perestroika*, and American schools of thought about the Soviet Union. These topics are approached through ESR's unique pedagogical emphasis on dialogue, critical thinking, and informed decision-making.

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